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# ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES

CHIEFLY ON CHURCH SUBJECTS





# ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES

Chiefly on Church Subjects

BY HENRY ALFORD, D.D.

DEAN OF CANTERBURY.



STRAHAN & CO., PUBLISHERS

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## P R E F A C E.

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THESE Essays and Addresses are collected in compliance with wishes expressed at various times. The publication of single articles, lectures, or sermons is mostly unprofitable, not only in the lower financial sense of the word, but also with reference to any effect which the writer may look to produce, or any permanence which he may desire to secure. But the covers of a volume may serve to provide for a number of such papers a chance of united action, or at all events facility of reference, and a certain artificial vitality.

The First and Second of those now reprinted call for no remark here. They deal with subjects of interest within the recognised limits of Church work; and I am not aware that in treating those subjects I have wandered, except in some mere matters of detail, out of the common track.

The Third Paper has been made the subject of

an adverse argument by the Rev. Philip Gell.\* The substance of Mr. Gell's objections to my view may be fairly stated by saying that he advocates the commonly-received dichotomy of man, as body and soul (or, as he sometimes phrases it, body and spirit), in opposition to the trichotomy—body, soul, and spirit—which, in accordance with the psychology of Scripture, I have upheld and enforced. The objections in detail, which he brings at the end of his volume, may all be resolved into this fundamental discrepancy; with regard to which I do not see how, if we abandon the Scriptural view of our nature, we can arrive at any intelligent account of either that nature's ruin or its redemption.

On the Fourth Essay, of course, as was to be expected, much has been said by way of blame. The view there taken of our relation to Protestant bodies differing from the Church of England is, in the main, that which was received and acted on, even by High Churchmen themselves, from the Reformation to the Act of Uniformity. And even after that disastrous blunder—even in the times of our own fathers—the free recognition of the Christianity and

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\* 'On the New Birth,' &c. Nisbet, 1868.

Churchmanship of nonconforming bodies still lingered at the bottom of men's hearts in the Church of England. It has only been by the growth of *modern* High Churchmanship that the hard and fast line, marking off the Episcopal from the non-Episcopal, has been deeply inked over and insisted on. This warping of English Church opinion has been in itself of the very essence of schism. It has well nigh severed the bough of the mustard-tree on which England has built her nest.

The endeavour of my Paper has been simply to put in an assertion of the old Church principle by which, and by which only, our Reformation was justified. If its assertions and proposals sound strange in our days, it is simply because we, and the men around us, have so entirely changed since such things were familiar words in England; because "the Lord's Song" is not suited to the atmosphere of a land now almost become strange to it.

The Fifth Address, here printed for the first time, was an assertion of the same principles in one of our metropolitan cathedrals: an endeavour to show that the true path of Christian unity is charity without compromise; not a latitudinarian enlargement of the boundaries of our own communion, but a frank



recognition, public and social, of the nonconforming bodies, coupled with the maintenance of our own distinctive Church doctrines and practices.

Around the facts indicated in the Sixth of these Papers, a strong conflict of opinions has gathered. Their history is very simple. An occasion arose of carrying into practice the principles which the two last Papers had maintained. The statutable constitution of Cheshunt College was such as to place it on the very platform of Christian recognition which I had previously advocated. The education in it of ministers for the Church of England was so far from being obsolete, that only within the past year had one been ordained from its class-rooms, and a friendly letter of approval, and of wishes of God-speed, written to the Principal by one of our High-Church Bishops.

It was suggested to me, privately and most kindly, that the Cheshunt Centenary might possibly be an occasion for the furnishing an example of the conduct towards Nonconformists which I had been recommending. As such I gladly recognised it, and have seen no reason to regret, but every reason to be thankful for, that recognition.

Of course, it was an act in the teeth of that party, unhappily now organised within the English Church,

which derives its principles and its sanctions from the modern Church of Rome. But regarding this point, I am thankful to say that English Churchmen are becoming less and less careful. Seeing that the abuse of that party has now been lavished on every thing and every person which our Church holds sacred—her Reformation and Reformers, her Bishops, her Liturgy, her missionary and charitable agencies—to have received the same measure at its hands would seem rather as the inevitable result of having acted according to her principles than as an indication of any conduct really to be reprehended.

And if the step was one in advance of what wise and sober Churchmen would have advised, I can only say that it was the practical logical consequence of principles in which I believe they would be at one with me: and these are no longer times when mere counsels of caution ought to set aside such practical consequences of acknowledged principles.

On the Seventh and last Paper much has been said by way of blame. In writing it, I did not suppose I was about to carry the majority of Churchmen with me. We have come in this country so entirely to identify the Church with her outward and tem-

poral state, that we refuse to contemplate her in any capacity but as a State Establishment, and ignore the fact of her having a divine origin, and a divine mission to the souls of men, irrespective of any outward standing whatever. And thus we come to regard the possibility of the disestablishment as a great disaster, and to accuse the men who look before them to such a possibility, and warn others to prepare for it, as craven-hearted, and yielding to a panic, and forsaking all defence in the time of danger.

The only detailed criticism of my article which has appeared—that in ‘Blackwood’s Magazine’ for November, 1868—has been constructed on these principles. I am there represented as “faint-hearted,” as “assuming that the future is hopelessly decided against us,” “speaking of the Church’s doom as fated, and of her cause as lost:” as “having written words which, under the plea of reconciling men to the inevitable, insinuate despair:”—and very much more is added of the same kind. In fact, there is hardly a considerable sentence in the article in which this *petitio principii* is not found. This is a strange way of treating an opponent’s argument: to attribute to him your own view of the subject which he has



treated, and to make him responsible for the delinquency of which he would have been guilty had he held that view, and written what he has written : whereas his view was just the contrary.

It is a remarkable feature of the article in ‘Blackwood,’ that there is not one sentence, from beginning to end, showing any even the least belief in the divine mission or work of the Church. Such a matter never enters into the writer’s view at all. And, if I may say it without offence, the author betrays singular ignorance both of the history of national establishments, and of the history of this question.

The idea of disproving my assertion,—that our next term in the series of national severances from the Church is, entire dissociation from it,—by the progress of France not having been thus worked out, would seem almost too absurd to be put on paper, did we not read it with our own eyes.

“She had an Established Church, and that Church was dominant. The citizens who professed other creeds successively emancipated themselves from the ‘crushing out stage’ and from practical disabilities. The development had the aid of the most energetic and sweeping State revolution known to history.

The series had every chance to continue; did it progress on to disestablishment? Quite the reverse. The Roman Catholic Church is now established in France, and so are Protestant Churches."

Now, really, when this is a man's use of history, he had far better not meddle with it. Can any two national developments be more totally unlike than those of England and France? And what were my words respecting the evolution of the series? "Supposing always that our nation is left free to develop its onward course." Who shall maintain that this has been the case with France, at all events since 1852?

And as to the history of this question itself. Our critic characterises my assertion, that the admission of Jews into the Legislature caused the State, in any sense whatever, to cease to be Christian, as "standing apart,—as being, at least for us, an original conception;" and goes on to characterize my definition of the union of Church and State as my own "specific definition, and no one else's, as far as he is aware." May I ask him, did he ever read the *Life of Arnold*?

It was my intention to have given a more detailed reply to various parts of that article; but on care-

fully going over it with that intent, I have really found it to be not worth while. As I have said above, its starting point is a begging of the question on which it stakes its issue: and on this it is all constructed. The difficulties and dilemmas to which the writer supposes he has reduced me, the charge in which he associates me with "a far more responsible person yet," of "using the grave word disestablishment without any serious reflection about its meaning," the terrible picture which he draws of the state of things if disestablishment be carried out, seemed to me all to vanish into thin air the moment one attempted to grapple with them. The article is one ably "done to order" in the interest of the party upheld by the magazine, but actually not touching by one word or one implication the great question at issue.

On one account alone does it deserve all praise. It is entirely free from all unfair imputation, and from all personal abuse: no mean commendation, in days when hardly a controversial article appears without examples of both.

DEANERY, CANTERBURY,

*November 30, 1868.*



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I.

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION OF THE  
CLERGY.

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AN ADDRESS READ AT THE BRISTOL CHURCH  
CONGRESS, 1864.





THE special Education of our Clergy may be considered under two heads—Theological and Pastoral.

Can we devise a remedy for the defects at present existing in both?

One essential condition of the problem must be carefully borne in mind. We are not called upon merely to produce accomplished Theologians, nor merely to make men skilful in the details of Pastoral work; but to endow the English Clergyman with more knowledge of both these. We might assemble our young men in Theological Colleges, and direct all their training to the required points. But we should thus leave forgotten our main requisite—that a certain peculiar position and character was to be taken into account. Our English Clergy are essen-

tially members of English society. They have an especial advantage which for instance the trained and disciplined Clerical bands of the Church of Rome never can possess. In all the relations of ordinary life, their influence is present; and is shewn by their being themselves examples of these relations. They are the leaven in the lump, working for good as none can who are marked off as a separate class of men.

And the main course of their general Education leads on to this their position of advantage. At School and at College, the lad whose destiny is holy orders is but one among his fellows. Here the foundations of his future influence are laid. To the acquaintances here formed he commonly owes his family connexions for life; and to the introduction among them of a brother's College friend, many an English household traces blessings of which this world sees but the dawn. Secure what pre-eminence you may in Theological learning, and what acquaintance you will with the duties and difficulties of the Pastoral office, you will have bought those acquirements ruinously dear, if they have been gained at the loss of separation of the Lay and Clerical Classes at School or in College. Any scheme for the better Education of our Clergy should not sacrifice one year—no, not one day, of our present united training of Clergy and Laity.

Now *school* education must be the same for all; and we must therefore enquire how far any special theological direction may be given during the University course. For I suppose it will hardly be maintained that the interval between the degree and the taking orders is enough for the purpose. The only solution of our problem seems to be, that our Universities should recognise a course of theology within the Faculty of Arts: or if I may speak as a Cambridge man, that, besides passing the general examination for the B.A. degree, it should be required of all candidates for the ministry to go out in a theological tripos, having its class-list like the other triposes. The objections commonly brought against this proposal are surely not to be weighed against its solid advantages. Nor is its end achieved by the present plan of theological examinations. At present they are rather excrescences upon, than integral parts of, the University course. We must make the acquirement of theology a *bonâ fide* aim of University education and opportunity for distinction in the period of undergraduateship, giving it a place at least in second and third year college lectures for honour men, and at some definite time marking off the candidates for the ministry for this lecture-room especially.

When these last have gone out in theology, comes

the necessity of providing for their training in pastoral work. Now can we look on Theological Colleges as likely to answer our purposes? I own I am not able to think so. This portion of the time of training for our Clergy ought not to be passed among those of their own class alone. The mixed University career has been the best of preparations for that high social character of an English gentleman, which is the *sine quâ non* as the substratum of the character of an English clergyman. Let us leave its effect where it is, and not risk the narrowing it, at this most critical period of a young man's life, into a spirit of a cliqueship and clerical exclusiveness.

And if only the theological department in our great Universities were adequately strengthened, I see no need for incurring this risk at all. Theological Colleges may be necessary now. I do not believe they would be then. Besides this, they must be, as preparations for the pastoral office, essentially inadequate. In this particular they must fail, as completely as those institutions known as industrial schools have failed in producing good servants; and for the same reason: that they must undertake to teach by theory, or with very scant practice indeed, that which can only be learned amidst the requirements and growing experience of real work.

We can have no worthy preparation except by

training in real pastoral work. Let us have in this most important profession, as we have in the others, a proper apprenticeship, during which its work may be learned by experience. Let it become a general practice among us for Incumbents to receive young candidates for orders, to train in parish work. Let these not be gathered in great numbers, so as to form anything like seminaries, but allotted according to the size of the cure, regard being also had to the aptitude of the Incumbent to teach and to attach young men to the work.

This practice would keep us clear of the dangers which beset every other plan; and it would bring with it not a few important collateral advantages. In most cases the candidate would be under the roof, and form part of the family of the Incumbent. Where this could not be so, he still would be under his eye, and in constant social intercourse with him. At first he would accompany the Incumbent himself, or his Curate, to the cottages of the poor and the bedsides of the sick; before long he might be intrusted with the sub-pastoral charge of a small district of his own. And thus experience would be acquired, and the first crude practice of the young pastor secured from occasioning disappointment, or furnishing an excuse for future indolence.

And the effect of such a previous training on the

young minister's habits of thought and feeling would be most beneficial. As a preparation for the effectual doing of Parochial work, I know of no substitute for personal intercourse with the poor themselves. He only can think as they think, who often hears them speak their thoughts. It is utterly in vain for a Clergyman to attempt to preach down to their level, who is not in their confidence; and the mere fact of such a course of cottage or bedside visitation would prevent the young Curate's first year's sermons from being, as they very often now are, almost thrown away upon his hearers.

If this plan is to become a recognised part of the training of our Clergy, it must of course be under regular Episcopal superintendence. It will be for the Bishop to judge what Incumbents are fitted to undertake the charge. It will be for him to require, before admission to holy orders, such certificate as he may think fit of this noviciate having been creditably and efficiently passed. And I am recommending no untried plan, but one which has been already found most valuable and effective; one which surely is worthy to be made general on a systematized plan co-extensive with the Church of England; furnishing, as it does in my view, our only prospect for better pastoral training.

I now come to the important question of the

education of our English Clergy with reference to PREACHING.

What preaching is it that the Church has a right to expect? It may be arranged under three heads.

First, the *written sermon*. No minister serves his flock as he might, who does not give them the best sermon that his powers of composition, and of careful adaptation to their case, will enable him to prepare. And this is true, of whatever station or character the flock may be. According as his hearers are gentle or simple, well-informed or ignorant, so will a skilful Pastor vary his style and manner of address; it may sometimes be his *ars celare*, sometimes *prodere artem*. Even with the poorest and most ignorant, the well-weighed word, the carefully pointed sentence, the pathos which owes its power to the studied cadence, will tell and be remembered. Besides this, the clear exposition and defence of the doctrines of the faith require all study and pains in composition; and again, whether it be to gentle or simple, the well-stored mind, able to reason on its own knowledge, ought to find in its teacher one who can meet it on its own ground; and if the ignorant are to be taught the whole counsel of God, surely too much care cannot be bestowed to convey it in a form which may attract them, and be taken up into their understandings.



For these reasons, the careful composition of sermons ought to be always a portion of the training of the Clergy. And I see no difficulty whatever in including it in the University theological course. It is a matter on which lectures might be given, and a course of reading prescribed. And these should be accompanied with continual practice, not perhaps just yet in the entire sermon, but in expression, in argument, in pleading ; in the opening, the conduct, and the peroration of a given theme. Such matters might form the subjects of competitive trials as much as other composition.

In the formation of style, this training would be most important. It is surely not beyond the truth, in our day, to say that most sermons have no character at all. Listen to almost any ordinary preacher, and you will perceive that he is not able to do that which he has undertaken, because he has never been taught the use of his tools ; he has never studied the effect of language on men's minds ; he does not know how to put forth with success the thoughts which occur to him.

And let it not be imagined that by the training which I propose we should risk the bringing about a prevalence of showy and ornate preaching, than which hardly anything can be worse. In most cases a florid style is the result of a shallow kind of

cleverness, and prevails in direct proportion to the absence of worthy subject-matter and real earnest thought. Now and then we find a preacher of this school possessed of true genius; one whose sparkling words are not phosphorescent, but ardent. Far be it from us to decry this or any other allowable style in itself, or to attempt to limit the Spirit of power in his method of manifestation; but thus much must be said, that of all styles, the florid is the very worst in the hands of an imitator, and that he is least likely to imitate it who is founded deepest in real theology, and knows most of the great preachers of the Christian Church. At present we want chastening and simplifying in the style of our written sermons; more of Latimer, and less of Johnson; more of the homely frankness of our version of Scripture, and less of the conventional grandiloquence of the newspaper article.

The second kind of preaching is the *expository*. No man is fit to teach a parish who is not able rightly to lay forth the Word of God. In order to this, the knowledge of at least the New Testament in the original language is indispensable. So far might be provided, as it is already in some measure, in the University course. But with candidates for the ministry, attention to it must be more special, and a respectable degree of proficiency absolutely

insisted on. That one who is to be for his parishioners the last appeal in their difficulties as to the sense of Scripture, should be himself incapable of reading the words in which Christ's Gospel is revealed, is surely an evil too monstrous to be tolerated.

Now expository preaching will be sometimes written, sometimes unwritten. Every congregation ought to have the oral running exposition of passages of Scripture laid forth and familiarized by explanation and illustration, in a reverent but at the same time in a colloquial manner. The general neglect of this kind of preaching among us is lamentable. Any visitor to Roman Catholic Churches abroad will be deeply sensible of the loss which we thus incur in our influence from the pulpit.

The preparation will be twofold. It will partly be acquired by acquaintance with the sacred text, the history of its exegesis, and some of the writings of its great expositors. Of these, far beyond all others, stand out Augustine and Chrysostom, without some portion of whose exegetical works no theological course would surely be completed. And then comes the need of practice. As far as written exposition is concerned, this might be supplied, as in the last case, by the composition of the expository homily being required, as well as that of the regular sermon. As

regards spoken exposition, the practice will fall under the next head of preaching.

The Church has also a right to the full outpouring of the minister's heart in *unwritten address*. He who cannot speak to his people without book has never learned the most effectual method of influencing them from the pulpit.

The requisites for good unwritten address are two—what to say, and how to say it. As our Clergy are now sent out, sometimes neither of these is present; no store of matter has been laid up, no practice in public speaking has been acquired. Sometimes there is the store of matter, but without the readiness or the confidence requisite for the putting it into words; more often, alas, the power of speaking is present, but what to say worthily has never been furnished; and the result is, the common-place extempore preacher, washy or flashy,—the speaker against time,—the deliverer of one sermon only under various disguises, than whom a more unprofitable cumberer of our pulpits does not exist. It is such as these who have brought the great art of pulpit oratory into disgrace among us—an art which, let me remind you, employs perhaps more, and more simultaneously, than any other, all the highest faculties with which we are gifted. For it brings into wonderful contemporary exercise the memory, draw-

ing from her stores of treasured knowledge; the judgment, accepting and rejecting; the plastic power of the creative imagination, clothing in fit words; the fire of the burning heart, in which those words are tempered and made to glow with present life; the utterance of the ready tongue, pouring forth its periods, now rapid and voluble, easily and quickly apprehended, now grave and well weighed, and of measured march, because time is needed for their effect. Nor are the external organs idle in this truly wonderful concentration of human powers; the ear with its judgment of cadence and rhythm; the eye keeping watch for effect on the hearers, ready to report the kindling glow of sympathy on the upturned faces, or to give warning of the drooping eye and the flagging attention. I ask, is it excusable in us as a Church not to cultivate this greatest of all the instruments of pulpit influence?

And how may it best be cultivated? At school, the foundation may be laid, in the more frequent and more general practice of speaking and reading in public. But I am sensible that this is the portion of the ministerial work for which it seems least possible to provide adequate preparation. At College, what is done in this direction must be more among students themselves, than as any part of the University course. In the clerical apprenticeship following the B.A.

degree, some practice might be gained, but scanty in amount and inferior in kind. The pupil might be set to conduct the cottage lecture in the presence of his incumbent, and might from him receive hints as to his faults or promise of efficiency.

But in this matter we must look rather to furnishing the mind, and training its faculties, than to direct practice. It would be far from desirable that a very young man, imperfectly furnished with matter, should be habituated to extempore public speaking. Such practice would of itself lead to empty declamation, which of all things we are striving to avoid.

So that I see no way except, simultaneously with imparting a sound theological and homiletic education, to impress on our candidates the duty of making the free address a part of their pastoral work ; giving them, perhaps, special lectures on this kind of preaching, pointing out to them its dangers, and teaching them how to use its immense powers to the best account.

For practice, we must look to the Parochial work itself. Years on years are wanted, before a Clergyman acquires the full power and can wield the entire resources of unwritten preaching : before he becomes thoroughly aware of its great difficulties, and regards it, not as a saving of time and trouble, but as his highest and hardest effort, and the written sermon

not as the greater, but as the lesser toil of the two.

ON READING I have not much to say. Here the main work must be done at school, in lessons and prizes in reading, before any special direction is given. If this were the case, I believe that the end desired with regard to our Clergy would be attained. It is not directions how to read this or that which we want, but general instruction in the art of reading well. We want to get rid of the slovenly reader, the drawling reader, the pompous reader, the emphatic\* reader; of the gentleman who, as my Parish Clerk once remarked to me of a casual helper, reads the Lessons as if he had made them: in a word, of all marked peculiarity.

For our own solemn services ought not to be an exhibition of reading, but a reverent and effective utterance of the prayers of the congregation, and of the inspired Word of God; and we may say of reading, as Pericles says of the gentler sex, that the best reading is that which provokes least remark, and he among us wins the highest praise, of whom a devout parishioner, on being asked how

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\* This was much found fault with at the time; but I repeat it deliberately. The reader who has been *taught* where to lay his emphasis, is a hinderer of effect, as compared with him whose emphasis is the result of cultivated common sense; and I am mistaken if the result of cultivation of his common sense be not an almost entire absence of emphasis.



his minister reads, might answer, that he never observed.

Here as elsewhere, that which is empty makes the most clatter ; and a studied manner of reading generally shows that the study has not extended much further. The danger of reading Scripture amiss will be obviated by adequate knowledge of the meaning of the sacred text : and the first timidity might be overcome by the practice, which I take it for granted would be general, of the Clerical pupil reading the Lessons in Church. This might also furnish opportunity for hints to be given as to intonation and the management of the voice—if indeed these have not been already furnished at school.

It will be seen that I have spoken as if the Universities, and they alone, were to be the schools for our Clergy. That this cannot exclusively be the case, I am well aware : but surely the more we approximate to it, the better we shall be furnished with efficient ministers. If the Universities require supplementing, let it be done by other colleges, provided they be conducted under University sanction, and subject to regular inspection from the Universities ; and provided their candidates be required to pass, not their own college examinations only, but that appointed for the University candidates also.

The only excuse for such institutions would be the



pressure of numbers ; for I cannot see that the adoption of a lower sumptuary standard ought to be admitted as a reason for sacrificing the immense advantages of University education. On the one hand, I am sure that the opening of any inlet into holy orders which would lower the average social position and influence of our Clergy, would be unadvisable ; and on the other, I am persuaded that every reasonable facility for diminished expense might be gained by foundations at the Universities themselves. What we want is not a larger supply of men at all hazards, but an effectual guarantee for adequate training. And this is only to be found at those great central institutions which are in the full gaze of the public eye, and acted on directly by the expression of the opinion of the Church.

If I may seem to have dealt but little with the personal religious character of candidates for the ministry, and the means of subserving it, the reason has been because that gravest of all requisites did not seem to come within the actual scope of my subject, but rather to underlie all I might say, and necessarily to be presupposed. If the heart be not right with God, no amount of theological acquirement, or of pastoral training, will make an efficient minister. It is for us to gather the material and lay the pile ; it is the fire from heaven alone that can

kindle it. By the increased efforts of Christian parents, by the recognised power of Christian baptism, by the mighty pleadings of the Church in prayer, may we gain the outpouring of the blessed Spirit, which may multiply among us men of God; but by our patient care, and diligent culture, and wise provision, are we to bring about that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished for the work to which that Holy Ghost hath called him.



II.

PREACHING: ITS ADAPTATION TO THE  
PRESENT TIMES.

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AN ADDRESS READ AT THE NORWICH CHURCH  
CONGRESS, 1865.



ASSUMING that our preaching is not sufficiently adapted to the present times, I may begin by saying that I conceive one principal cause of the defect to lie in want of training for the pulpit. Some care is now bestowed to make our clergy theologians ; we still take none to make them preachers. Nor is there much practice gained as the untaught work goes on. At the Bar and in the Senate, every day's experience is a lesson. The novice can observe the defects and the merits of others, and can measure his own successes and failures. A young clergyman hears for years perhaps his own voice only, perhaps but one besides his own. And success and failure are spread over too long periods, and are too partial and questionable, to exercise any real influence over his method of proceeding.

And I do not conceive special training to be impracticable. I will remind you that at the last Congress I ventured to look for this training partly to the Universities, partly to private clerical instruction under the sanction of the Bishop. As this defect is supplied, much of what now obstructs the power of the pulpit will be removed.

In our training, regard ought to be had to the state of the people, and to the history of the age. A preacher is addressing persons who have lived through certain changes of thought, and have laid up certain stores of experience. He who is unacquainted with these comes to them at a disadvantage, and speaks anachronisms. A young preacher ought to know the history of religious opinion in our land, especially as to its recent and even now proceeding movements. These need not be his subjects of address ; but they ought to lie in the background, and to be had regard to in what he says.

Local peculiarities should also not escape notice. Our young clergy are generally sent to their cures in ignorance on this point. Preaching ought to be different in its character for differing populations. Yet even so simple an axiom is often neglected. Sermons of the same type and cast of thought are served out to all classes alike. If the candidate for orders received private clerical training in or near to

the district where he is to labour, this would no longer be so.

It is to training that we must also look for better acquaintance with the sacred text, and more power of explaining it aright. In this respect the faults of our preaching are deplorable. It is not unusual to hear texts taken without regard to the context in which they occur, their very terms being often misconstrued and misunderstood. Sometimes a word supplied by the translators is made emphatic, and insisted on as principal in the sentence; the word which really carries the weight of meaning being passed over as unimportant.\* We cannot expect this to be otherwise with those who never have studied the Scriptures with a view to dividing them rightly: but it will be our grievous fault, if we suffer another generation to go forth into our pulpits equally unprepared.

I would venture to suggest whether the licence to preach might not be made less a matter of course than it is at present. The question is a difficult and delicate one; but it is not therefore to be altogether put by. Common sense seems to say that the power to preach should be tested before the duty is undertaken. The difficulty is, that the only feasible time of applying the test is too early in life for the trial to be a fair one. Powers might be afterwards de-



veloped, in presence of the work itself, which would not appear during preliminary training. Still, more might be done in this way than is done; and at least there ought to be some means of preventing important posts in the Church being filled by men notoriously incompetent as preachers. A Bishop ought not to be required to institute to such benefices persons whose pulpit ministrations have hitherto proved inert or obstructive.

Let me now come to those improvements which may be put in force by ourselves in our present practice. And first, as to our written sermons. I am persuaded that a partial breaking down of their present formality would vastly increase their interest and their power. To begin with the text. It is, of course, desirable that there should be sermons, whose argument or persuasion proceeds in accordance with or in amplification of certain inspired words. But it may be questioned whether our rigid practice of putting the text at the outset might not be with advantage varied. It was usual with some of our elder divines, and is now on the Continent, to introduce the text by some considerations leading to it, as, for example, the general circumstances of the day or season, or other particular inducement which influenced the preacher in his choice of a subject; or a statement of the exact phase of the truth which he

wishes to present, or an earnest pleading on some defective point, afterwards enforced by the sacred words. A text thus introduced, thus accounted for, will come with more force than if it were always abruptly given out, merely because such is the custom. Sometimes indeed it may be well to place our text far on in the sermon, or even towards the end. Our object is to impress on our people the sacred words; and it is for us to consider whether this may not be done in various ways, instead of always in one only. Again, it is surely not of necessity that a sermon should always have a text. The free treatment of the subject might sometimes be more impressive than the grouping that treatment rigidly round some Scriptural expression. Such form of composition is not unknown to us under the name of an "address;" but why should it not be ranked as a sermon, and have its due place and recurrence?

Next, as to arrangement. The formal first, second, third, and conclusion, is no doubt occasionally useful. Some minds require it to take hold by; some again are the better for its precision. But when used, let these divisions be always real, not fictitious: dependent on worthy associations of thought, not on trifling and unworthy ones. It is only a fallacy, and causes disorder of thought, to lead a hearer onward by mere alliterations, or by headings whose sequence

is purely fanciful. Order without a reason is only disorder without its excuse. And when the "heading" system is adopted, the sermon is thereby pledged to lucid and careful distribution according to the heads. The arrangement must carry its own justification, and be well pointed for its particular effect. And even then, if it be adopted too often, it becomes formal and tiresome, and a hindrance instead of a help.

But it is one thing to proclaim the divisions of a sermon, another to arrange it under divisions unproclaimed. All preaching ought to follow some natural sequence of thought; but the steps of this sequence are often best kept out of view, so that the subject itself, and not its artificial arrangement, may engage the mind of the hearer.

There are two portions in every sermon, on which its interest, at the time and afterwards, very much depends; its beginning, and its end. Whether the text precede or follow the former of these, one thing must be remembered; if the first sentences do not ensure attention, it will not easily be gained afterwards. We should make, not affected and startling beginnings, but at the same time not weak and commonplace ones. The first words should be weighty and impressive. They may either take the hearer *in medias res* at once, by putting the difficulty of the text or subject in the form of a question to be

answered, or they may set before him some Scripture or other history, bearing on that which is to be treated,—or state forcibly some recent event or some current opinion, which it will be the object of the sermon to comment on. The conclusion is equally important. The last few minutes should not be spent in diluting the effect of what has gone before. It is natural that we should dismiss our hearers with the mention of that future perfection in the Divine presence to which every Christian effort tends; but this should not be formally nor monotonously done. The subject previously treated should be kept in view to the last, and all general perorations should be tinted with its tone and character, leaving on the ear a sound full of the spirit of the sermon, not alien from it. And let this sound be the last, except the prayer to bless it, and the final Benediction. Singing after sermon is a mistake, if the conclusion have been such as we desire. As things are now, it is frequently a gain, inasmuch as any devout frame of mind is better than the listlessness of wearied attention.

These last words lead on to the question as to the desirable length in preaching. Most of our written sermons are too long. It is not the fancied requirements of the subject, but the well-known effect on the hearers, which is to be considered. Few sermons of forty-five minutes or an hour might not have been

better compressed into half an hour, which should certainly be our ordinary *maximum*. If, in the condensation, the expletives are struck out, and fine writing pruned away, so much the better. We all aim too much at rhetorical effect. We all confuse our arguments too much by illustration. In composing, we ought to ask ourselves what is most likely to penetrate the hearts of our hearers and to abide there; and the answer, if we give it honestly, unbiassed by personal vanity, will be, earnest thought expressed in simple words. We are apt to forget, even while we profess it, that "we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord;" and while in the matter of our sermons He is chief, in their diction and style we are often aiming to get ourselves credit by the setting forth of Him.

There is nothing which requires more unsparing self-denial than the really effective sermon. All mere display of learning, all "pride that apes humility," all that savours of petty cleverness, all that, when read over, flatters the man, should be ruthlessly erased. Let the sentences be plain and intelligible, going about their work, and nothing but their work, freed from the hindrances thrown in its way by unusual words, startling or obscure thoughts, and traps laid for applause.

We need not preach down to our simplest hearer.

A feast must not be all crumbs. He who labours under a disadvantage compared with those around him, must, as everywhere else, so in church also, suffer from that disadvantage. The only way in which the simple and ignorant can gain instruction is, from portions understood and recollected in that which, though simple, carries no affectation of ignorance. Sermons professedly to children are always failures; being, on account of this affectation, the very worst adapted to children's understanding. There was One who preached to children that which children love; but it was by His parables, containing depths which the wisest cannot fathom. We shall preach best to the simplest, if we preach simply to all.

And one guarantee for this simplicity will be earnestness and genuineness. Much of the failure of preaching in our day is owing to men not feeling, or not appearing to feel, what they say. A clergyman's ordinary life is known as matter of fact; his conversation is patent to all. What he believes, what he feels, on a hundred subjects, his friends and acquaintance know well. But for two half-hours in the week he stands and says things totally different from his sayings at any other time. His thoughts and feelings seem to belong to a different being. They may be good and admirable; well expressed

and delivered. But who cares for sermons which are not reflected in the life?

I am not referring now to the graver fault—a man's want of practice of his own preaching,—but to the almost equally fatal one, his want of sympathy with it: his acting two men—one out of the pulpit, and one in it. We must not always judge this harshly as regards the preacher himself. It is not in all cases due to the want of personal religion. I have known it to be so with some of the deepest and most earnest personal Christians—men who would wear themselves out for their flocks, and for the love of Him who sent them.

It is more the fault of the system, than of the men. There is a divergence between the formal language and thought of the pulpit, and the realities of the life within and without. The force of habit has rendered us different men when preaching and when not preaching. We hear of men overflowing with zeal and love, that they are miserable preachers; and mainly for this reason. The fault is naturally most difficult to overcome; but it is one so destructive of all the uses of preaching, that no one of us ought tamely to rest under it. If change of place, or form, or time of address, tend to remedy it, let such change be adopted, if it be only for a while, till a better habit is gained. Surely any experiment



ought to be tried, within the bounds of decorum, which might remove a weight from the preacher's tongue, and give him free utterance of what is at his heart. I believe that we all are too apt to regard the sermon as a thing entirely *sui generis*—as a venerable institution, instead of a mere instrument of conviction and persuasion. We fancy that it requires conventional phrases and forms of thought, and that the free expression of the feelings and yearnings of the heart is out of place. We shrink from allusion to matters of present interest, as beneath the dignity of the pulpit. If such things are at all introduced, it is in so disguised a form as hardly to be recognised. The descriptions are stilted and unreal: as far off actual life as a group of statuary. Surely the pulpit would lose none of its real dignity at the hands of men of intelligence and judgment, by condescending more to real life. It cannot be difficult to touch close on men's habits and practices without mentioning by name things trivial or ludicrous.

Another cause of unreality is the prescription of motives and states of mind which have no meaning for our hearers. It is not uncommon to hear sermons delivered with the purest intention, by the best men, and sometimes with great earnestness and ability, which have absolutely no point of contact with



religious life, as it is and must be among ourselves. The preacher has been to his books only, not to his people and to his own heart.

But of this source of inefficiency itself we shall do well to seek an account. Our lot has been cast far on in a great religious movement. Of the wild stir of our fathers' days, and of our own youth, only the faint echoes have reached the bulk of our present hearers. Over the living sense of the theological terms which we use, grand battles of the Church have been fought; into the work which God gave those terms to do, holy men threw their yearnings and their lives. But many of those words have survived their first fervid meaning, and have outlasted the reality of their work. It may be that our theology, even though created by the Divine Word, and breathed upon by the Almighty Spirit, needs to touch anew the mother soil of the human heart, that it may spring up invigorated for the battles of the Lord.

Another great hindrance to the effect of our preaching is, the spirit of party. It is heart-sickening to go to church to be fed and edified, and to come away having heard nothing but a tirade against those who believe in the same Lord, and are doing the same work as the preacher.

But the evil prevails among men of more worth

and weight than the mere disclaimers against others. The Church is divided into sections, distinguished by their lines of thought and modes of expression. A preacher makes it an object to stand well with that section to which he is commonly reputed to belong. He reflects its peculiarities, he uses none but its well-known phrases. If he happen to stray over the line, and allow himself to take up the other side of truth, criticism is busy with him. Any ingenious freedom of thought and speech opens him to remark. He is tempted to speak, not all that he feels to be true, but only so much of it as he dares to utter.

And thus our preaching becomes exclusive and one-sided. The Churchman of the opposite party, who might be won by the slightest fair recognition of the great side of truth for which he contends, departs, loathing the teaching which seems to shut him out, and conscious in his own heart of earnest faith which the preacher has ignored or even negatived.

This will not be remedied, until we learn to recognise in our teaching more of the history of the great currents of religious thought, and also learn to know one another and trust one another far more than we do; until we cease to make the mere watch-words of party the staple of our discourses, and deal

with truth as largely as the Bible deals with it, and as the heart of man apprehends it.

The two great parties will still retain their own bias. As long as the Church endures, one man will value more the individual subjective life, another the associated and objective. One will lay hold on the Person of our glorified Head by direct acts of faith, another by the Sacraments and their appointed ministers. And each, in doing so, will be in his proper work, provided he give due place for the view of the other, and take into account not one side only, but the whole of that truth which is made up of both views together.

It is impossible not to say something of the disadvantage at which those preach in our day, who treat timidly or disingenuously the labours of criticism and science. Let there be fewer and fewer among us, who are in these respects defending untenable positions merely by strong and despotic words; fewer and fewer of such little faith as not to believe that researches into truth will at last be guided into truth; fewer, who know not that every truth, wherever and by whomsoever found, is a gain for God's cause and God's Word. Let our attitude be manly, open, and fearless. Above all, let us never adopt nor approach the pious fraud, in dealing with

Scripture or with nature. Never was there a time when such artifices were easier of detection or more fatal in their consequences. He who can bring himself to speak lightly of difficulties which in his heart he feels, or to propound solutions which in his heart he rejects, must not be surprised if the result of his ministry be found on the side of unbelief. The position of the clergy of the Church of England in regard of Scripture criticism and of science is a high and solemn one; let us not abdicate it, let us not disgrace it.

I am persuaded that one considerable hindrance to the effectiveness of preaching in our times has been, the undue multiplication of charity sermons. One of the greatest of our London preachers—called away from us, alas, in the full vigour of his pleading for God\*—was wont to say, in his strong language, that it was surely a monstrous thing to be obliged so often to suspend his own work, in order to provide common funds for institutions which it was the bounden duty of the whole people to uphold.

The mind of the great Apostle on this point is very clearly expressed: "That there be no gatherings when I come." He would not have his office of teaching interfered with, and his power of apos.

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\* The late John Hampden Gurney.

tolic injunction abused, for the purpose of exciting the people to perform the ordinary duty of almsgiving.

And it would surely be well if those in high place in our own Church followed his example. The present practice is most undesirable. The dinner and sermon system, on which many of our great charities mainly subsist, has confessedly nothing to be said for it, but that it brings in money which is unattainable by other means. The Church, in accordance with the Apostle's rule, has provided the regular incentives to almsgiving—certain sentences of Holy Scripture, read on the first day of each week as a part of her regular public service. There will, of course, be special occasions requiring particular appeal and explanation ; but if the prescribed channel of almsgiving, the weekly offertory, were restored to its proper activity, more than half of our charity sermons might be spared, and those that were left would become far more solemn realities.

Much has been said on the written sermon, which applies alike to all preaching. It only remains that we make a few special remarks on the other kinds.

We sadly need more set exposition of Scripture in its context and argument. Preaching entirely from mere texts, has induced a distorted and fragmentary view of Holy Writ, and has effectually taught men

how not to understand it. One sermon in the day might well be expository. The portions appointed in the service will suggest varying subjects; and when no great themes claim precedence, whole sections or even books might be taken in hand as a series. But these serial expositions will need watching: they are apt to weary the hearers if unintermitted, and if discontinuous, to lose their interest. Advent and Lent will perhaps be the fittest opportunities, as both justifying the practice and limiting it. Exposition is best unwritten: provided that the necessary conditions, previous careful study, and self-possessed and free expression, be fulfilled. He whose eye is on a book has no chance against him whose eye is on yours: nor he whose words have been set down for him, as compared with him who passes freely from thought to thought. Every preacher should strive after the power of unwritten exposition of Scripture. Where the man is in earnest, the mind carefully stored, and the heart full, I believe that the cases of failure will be found very rare.

We thus come to speak of the unwritten sermon, the free utterance of the well-stored mind, the yearning heart, and the ready tongue. With all its immense advantages, it labours under this disadvantage, that it may be counterfeited by mere

volubility. And thus, while it might become our most powerful engine for good, its abuse has greatly contributed to lower the influence of the pulpit among us. Most mischievous and most inexcusable is the preacher who, having nothing really to say, yet speaks his half-hour or more of wretched commonplace Sunday after Sunday, almost without preparation at all. Worthily to preach without book, costs beyond comparison the most careful preparation, the greatest anxiety in the forethought, the hardest labour in the act. And the effect of thoroughly good preaching of this kind is high in proportion. As long as it is not cultivated among us, we are leaving the flower and crown of persuasion for others to grasp. The man who is in the pulpit what our great masters of pleading are at the Bar and in the Senate, is almost unknown to the Church in England. The few seeming exceptions only make the necessity of culture more apparent. The genius which they manifest might, with training, have become effective eloquence; but now it is erratic, and misses its aim. Men who might have held the hearts and wielded the energies of vast multitudes, are wasting their powers in mere rhetorical displays, or in raising fair fabrics of speech whose logical foundations are unsound.

The method of training for public oratory, and the



safe limits of its exercise, I ventured to suggest at the last Congress, and to what was then said I am obliged now to refer.

Surely a more solemn position cannot be conceived than that of him who stands and preaches to a congregation. From each of those upturned faces there looks out a soul for which Christ died. In that post of vantage stands Christ's ambassador, pleading, constraining, admonishing. To each of them, he speaks as none else can speak. They are come expressly to be dealt with in God's name. The words which he uses, the motives which he urges, will never be charged with being too serious for the occasion. He can assume, and they will grant, truths which elsewhere would not pass unchallenged. In private and in society, pride, rivalry, antagonism, come in to withstand the truth. The man is on his defence, mounting guard over the fair front of his building. But here the heart is in its inner chamber, listening for the whispers of truth. Behind those faces work conviction, sympathy, longing desire. "I am the man;" "God be merciful to me a sinner;" "Let me spend and be spent;" "O that I were gentle, and holy, and pure!"—these are the thoughts that the preacher is able to waken; these the springs of life that he can touch.

Let us reflect that every Sunday at noon, there are



in our land many thousands thus employed in speaking, many hundreds of thousands in thus listening,—and we shall have some idea of the vastness of the agency of which we treat. Its results for good, even now, may not be obtrusive or self-assertive; they may not be distinctly traceable in the spread of any one particular line of persuasion; they may be constantly vilified and ignored; but they are none the less real and substantial. Let us not depreciate them, but strive to multiply them tenfold. If within the Church energy is languishing, and love waxing cold, let us not think scorn to lay aside our prescribed habits and cherished proprieties—nay, even, if it must be so, to become foolish and despised, for His work who emptied Himself of His glory for us. If without the infidel rages and is confident,—and to answer him now seem like buckling on the shield when the dart has entered and is rankling,—let us, by simple, earnest proclaiming of our blessed Master, by laying forth His Word, and making real His ordinances, maintain that living and childlike faith, that sober and healthy Church life, which may preclude the unbeliever's access to us, and ensure him no sympathy among us.

III.  
THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT GLASGOW,  
DECEMBER, 1867.



IT seems to me that, in these days, our thoughts on the Christian Conscience want reviewing and clearing. Its origin, its description, its operation, and present extent of influence on public and private opinion and action, may perhaps profitably be made matter for an essay.

“The good that I would, I do not : but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Rom. vii. 19.) Who are these two—the I that desires—the I that acts? Not two persons : for it is one and the same Paul that both desires and acts. Nor can we say that both are the simple and consistent doings of one and the same person. There is a complication, there is a conflict, there is a coercion. A desire to act in one way arises within : this desire is thwarted, and action is hindered. A reluctance to act in another

way is felt: the reluctance is overborne, and action takes place. And this is not as when the body refuses the bidding of the will; when energy is suspended by lassitude, or the desire of quiet broken by nervous excitement. Those conflicts, those defeats, are temporary; but this is enduring. Those are between the flesh and the will: this is within the will itself. For in this description, there are two wills. We will one way, we act another way. But no man can be properly said to act without willing; the motion of conscious action is voluntary, abstinence from that motion is voluntary also. So that within the man is a will saying, "I will," and protesting against the will which is carried out in action: sitting, so to speak, bound, and witnessing its own defeat. And when we come to inquire about this deposed, this frustrated will, there can be no question that it is the nobler, the higher of the two, though it be thus defeated. For it bears testimony for good and against evil: whereas its victorious adversary thwarts the good, and carries out the evil.

So then we find ourselves in the presence of these two phenomena in man: a higher will, a nobler consciousness, testifying to good, protesting against evil, but overborne; and a lower will, a less noble consciousness, putting aside the good, choosing the evil, and commonly prevailing. And we may observe

that both these are resident in the inner man, not belonging the one to the inner, the other to the outer. However the lower will may become entangled with, and enslaved by, the bodily emotions, it is yet a decision given not in nor by the body, but in and by the mind.

But now let us go a step further, and let us suppose that in some given case the higher will obtains the mastery, and that the word of command which the mind gives to the body to act or not to act, proceeds not from the lower will but from the higher; or, if necessarily from the lower, then from the lower subordinated to and absorbed into the higher. Let us suppose, in other words, a state of things which would be expressed by "The good that I would do, that do I: and the evil which I would not do, that do I not." Manifestly, this is no impossible supposition, but one which is often, though not ordinarily, realised in fact.

What have we now obtained? Why this: that my practical will, the ruler of the acts which I do, and the non-acts which I refuse to do, lies open to two distinct influences—one drawing it upward, in the direction of good and to the avoidance of evil, the other drawing it downward, in a direction which may lead to the adoption of evil, and to the avoidance of good. And there can be no question that

this my practical will emanates directly from, and is the expression of, my personality : that it is the exponent of myself.

But let us advance a step further in this preliminary examination. This practical will, of which we have spoken, is the result of thought, is the issue of determination. Are thought and determination peculiar to man? Certainly not. Every kind of organized animal life, in its measure and after its kind, possesses them. The practical will may be as limited as in the oyster, or as free as in the eagle; but it is equally in obedience to it, that conscious animal action takes place. In man, of all animals, its capacities are greatest; but its nature is not distinct. In man, with all its intellectual powers and wide-reaching susceptibilities, it is but the animal soul; in the lowest organized being, with all its narrowness and dulness, it is the animal soul still. The Greeks, in their wonderfully accurate language, expressed by the same term ( $\psi\chi\acute{\eta}$ , *psyché*), the soul of man which he has to save, and the life of the reptile which man crushes under his foot. And it would have been immensely for our profit if we had done the same. For then we should have understood what very few now do understand, the true nature, the true place, of this our intellectual and emotional being. We then should have read in our Bibles not only,

“Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it;” but also (for the same word is used), “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?” For it is this life of man that carries his practical will, with all those motions of intellect and feeling which set it at work: it is the life, which is mysteriously bound up with the body, and which is reft from it at death; it is this life, which if a man spend upon God and upon good, he shall save to life eternal.

Infinite misunderstanding, infinite mischief, has arisen from confounding this animal soul of man with his immortal part. We hear frequently, in fact it is the usual and still commonly-received notion, that man is compounded of two parts, the mortal body, and the immortal soul. Whole sermons, whole treatises, proceed on this view of man. Books of argument have been written to prove the immortality of the soul; and have been for the most part written in vain. The reasons alleged have been acute enough in themselves, but capable of the easiest refutation. The soul, it was maintained, was immortal because it was indivisible, or because of some of the functions which it performs independently of the body in which it dwells. It was easy to see that this, if it



proved anything, proved too much. For how is my animal soul more indivisible than the animal soul of my dog? And what faculty have I that, after his kind, he has not? No consideration of this sort in fact proved more than the pretty conceit of our metaphysical poet,—

“Thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof  
That they were born for immortality.”\*

There is absolutely no reason for believing, if man is compounded only of body and soul, that he continues to exist after this present life. The powers and faculties of the soul decay with the decay of the body. The same blow which ends the corporeal organism, ends also the existence of animal self-consciousness, which, as far as we know from any inductive argument, is bound up with that organism.

Even the witness of nature herself was against this twofold division of man. We do not, we cannot, account ourselves a mere higher form of the brute, as on this theory we must do. For according to it we differ from the brute only in degree of intelligence and higher bodily endowment, and not in any matter of kind at all. Whereas it is the impregnable conviction of our race, unaffected by any adverse theories of philosophers, that between the lowest intelligent man, and the highest intelligent animal, there is a

\* Wordsworth—‘Sonnet in King’s College Chapel.’

gulf fixed, impassable by any mere intensification or depreciation of existing faculties.

And wherein does the difference consist, that places man on the one side of this gulf, and the brute on the other? man on the heavenward side, the brute on the earthward? Wherein, but in this, that whereas man and the brutes have body and soul in common, man has a third and higher part, which none of the brutes possesses?

And this third and higher part is, man's SPIRIT; that portion of him in and by which he is conscious of God. No created being on this earth is conscious of God, but man.

“Of all the creatures, both on sea and land,  
Only to man Thou hast made known Thy ways,  
And put the pen alone into his hand,  
And made him secretary of Thy praise.” \*

And he is thus conscious of God, not by virtue of a higher degree of that which he possesses in common with the lower tribes of animal life, but by virtue of something which he alone is endowed with. No mere animal has a conscience. An animal may be trained, by hope of reward and fear of punishment, to simulate the possession of a conscience—to behave nearly as if conscious of right and wrong. An animal may be acted on by its affections, all situated in the animal soul, so as to lead it to consult, to be

\* Dryden—‘Annus Mirabilis.’

united to, even to anticipate, the wishes and feelings of another animal, or of a human master; but no animal ever knew wrong as wrong, or right as right; ever shrunk from inflicting pain on principle, or practised self-denial except emotionally. Conscience, the source of the will that would do the good, that would not do the evil, is entirely a function of that nobler part, the spirit, which man possesses exclusively.

How do we know this? What has enabled us to detect, to describe, to reason upon, this higher portion of the threefold nature of man? I answer, We know it by revelation. Holy Scripture has revealed to us not God only, but our own nature. This its threefold division was not recognised, was not perceptible, by the Greek philosophers. Wonderfully accurate and keen as were their investigations, they could not attain to this discovery, for it was altogether above them. Neither again was it entirely made known in Old Testament days; nor could it be, in the gradual unfolding of God to man, and of man to himself. It is matter of Christian revelation. We are first led into the secrets of our own nature, when the entire redemption and renewal of that nature are disclosed.

And in this disclosure, the Christian Scriptures, as they stand entirely alone, so are they throughout consistent with themselves in asserting this triple

nature of man. In fact, this consistency is kept in all the anticipatory notices in the Old Testament also. From the first description of man's creation, to the latest notice of his state by redemption, the Scripture account of him is one and the same, and is found nowhere else. The body, created by the Almighty out of the dust of the earth; the divine nature breathed into this body already organised, by God Himself; the animal soul, common to man and the brute creation, expressed by the same term in speaking of the brutes and of man, carrying his personality, being that which he was made to be, "and man became a living soul."

I cannot refrain from further commenting on this very important description, because the comment lies so directly in our course of making plain this matter.

Man became this living soul. This was his characteristic: this was the hue which his being took. He became this living soul, connected in its upper portion with the Divine spirit breathed into him, connected in its lower portion with the organized body, with the inlets of the senses, with the earthly and the bestial. Let us mark this well. He was not at first mainly spiritual, but mainly animal; an example, not of the spirit that gives life, but of the soul, that lives by life given. This, we are told by St. Paul in his grand reasoning on the words, was

necessary : necessary, that the man should not be put first into the sphere of the spiritual, but into the sphere of the soulish, animal, nature. If we may venture to supply the link missing here, we should say it was necessary, because all God's works have an upward progress, not a downward. Our race had to emerge, not to be submerged : from being headed by an Adam who was a living soul, to be headed by an Adam who is a life-giving spirit,—not *vice versâ*.

Well, then, what followed ? Man being thus constituted, drawn upward, drawn downward,—himself, so to speak, standing on the platform of the animal life,—the downward influence prevailed ; the solicitations of sense overcame the pleadings of the Father of his spirit. And what has been the result ? Had the spirit prevailed, life would have been his characteristic : the Divine Spirit would have endowed with immortality the animal soul, and its vessel the body ; but, the flesh having prevailed, death became the characteristic. The earthly body was not lifted above its natural infirmity of decay ; the animal soul, with its emotions and its intelligences, passed into a living death, bereft of the leading light of the spirit, and having left only light enough to make its darkness visible. The spirit, the informing, guiding, elevating principle, shrunk up and dwindled almost to nothing ; nay more, became corrupted by contact

with corruption, as well as by loss of its first guiding principle. And in this shrunken and dwarfed and corrupted state the spirit, the nobler part of man, has continued; not extinguished, but subsisting, as the comparison has been aptly made, in the same way as certain rudimental organs subsist in bodies which use them not. Man has been, everywhere and in every age, animal, or, as Scripture would say, *psychical*,—the creature of his animal soul, not of his divine spirit; led by reason, led by imagination, led by emotion, but not led by consciousness of God. And yet, stunted and corrupted as man's spirit was and is, it has never been extinct, nor has its better voice been utterly silenced. Even when its higher functions have been in abeyance, it has testified by the conscience. Right, because it is right, has been approved, even by men who did not practise it; wrong, as being wrong, was disapproved, even while it was being done.

But I said that conscience, in the ordinary natural man, does little more than make the darkness visible; and so it is. Even in the savage, the spark remains smouldering, but nothing more. As man rises in civilisation, and in the training of the intellect, the spark brightens and spreads, but it is a spark still. It possesses no guiding light, no warming power. In Christian lands first it breaks into a flame, and

begins to enlighten and cheer, because there first it is that the law of the Spirit of life sets men free from the law of sin and death; there it is that the man's spirit is revived and endowed with its proper growth, no longer stunted and dwarfed; is put into union with Him who is the principle of all life and all growth, and in virtue of that union becomes partaker of His prerogative, and, with Him, is waiting for all things to be put under its feet.

It is a grand and a glorious thing, this higher and nobler part of man, dwelling in perpetual sunshine; this, of which we may say, almost with the poet, that—

“ Its great bright eye most silently  
Up to the Throne is cast; ”

looking evermore above the letter of law to its spirit; casting its bare arms, free from the fetters of precedent and human tradition, ever up into the pure blue sky; feeling for love, feeling for truth, feeling for justice:—a grand and glorious, but a wayward and a fitful thing: slumbering for centuries in nations, dormant for long years of a man's life; but when it wakes, when it speaks, leading, at any cost, however perilous, straight into conflict, straight into solitude, straight into bereavement.

A strange thing too; for it may speak ever so low, and armies cannot silence it. Its utterances



may savour of folly, or of imprudence, or of inaptitude for practical life; but they drop like seeds into the great heart of mankind: they fashion policies, they rule empires: that which was erewhile shouted as the nickname of an enthusiast, that which was just now branded upon the flesh of a martyr, shall before long glitter in gems on a sceptre, and float out to the breezes as the righteous emblazonment of a realm. And a fearful and a dangerous thing it is too; for in the midst of successful iniquity, or disregarded equity, let it but lift up its voice, and brave men turn cowards; let but one note of that voice be heard from the lisping tongue of a child, and bold workers of wrong, and busy toilers for gain, and the world's idols, and the world's idlers, shrink and shrivel up, as if the icy north had blown upon them; because they know that a power, swifter than the telegraph, and keener than the lightning, prints all its words in that book of remembrance which the angel shall hold open when all mankind shall meet before God.

But we must not treat of men's conscience, even in Christian countries, as being infallible, or universally enlightened. It is clear in its testimony, it is trustworthy in its verdict, only in proportion as men have become Christians. In every Christian land there are a certain number of persons, greater or less, according to the purity or corruption of its Christianity,



who form, as it were, the focus of the bright light of the Christian conscience. Sometimes they are banded together, and acting on the public: but this can only be where the utterance of opinion is free. And even in such lands, the men of pure and clear Christian conscience often know not one another, and work not together. They are separated by barriers of rank, or of sect, or of other circumstance, and it is not till God's Providence has made utterance inevitable, that it is discovered how irresistible a power was gathering in secret. Thoughts that it would take a bold man to utter on a platform to-day, may to-morrow be carried like a tide-wave over the land, and may the next day have become a confessed basis of national action. Of course, in lands where utterance is not free, the Christian conscience is repressed and borne down. But even there, it is, in the long run, repressed and borne down in vain. Like the up-bursting of the boiling granite from the central heat, it will find its way through the chinks and leaks of the thickest and tightest impost of artificial rule; or, if it cannot, it will end by up-heaving and shattering in a moment the compacted crust of ancient and prescriptive wrong.

But our immediate concern is happily not with repressive despotisms. We dwell in a land which is of all lands the freest as to this matter. The Chris-

tian conscience here may utter its voice, and act unrestricted on society. It is as thus free, and as thus acting, that we have to consider it. The winning of this its charter of freedom has been, of all others, the work which we as a people have had to do in the world. In many of the elements of a nation's greatness, others may have surpassed us; in arts, and in arms, it would be mere vanity to vaunt ourselves as first in the world; but in this one thing we stand unapproached and unrivalled—that of all the nations, we alone have thoroughly come to understand the rights of the Christian conscience, and are in the main acting according to that our understanding.

And from the moment when our eyes begun to be opened to these rights, we among the nations have taken the lead in bringing about moral changes, and reforms in the direction of the gentler feelings of humanity, in the practice of men. We have had our seasons of torpor, nay, our seasons of apparent retrogression: but even these latter were preparing the way for advances yet to come, bringing about their own reaction in the Christian mind of the people. And in some of these periods, retrogression and progression have remarkably acted on, and prepared the way for, each other. The assertion of the right, made as it was by imperfect men, who imagined, as those who are impassioned always will do, that man's

wrath works God's right, contained in itself elements of wrong; so that while the right was waxing strong and becoming the axiom of the nation, the wrong, even while it was being wrought, was raising for itself adversaries, and so preparing men for another assertion of the right on the other side.

We might find striking examples of that which we are asserting, in the great struggle of the seventeenth century. There can be no doubt that the Cavaliers, amidst much that was foul, and unjust, and unfaithful to God's law, had on their side also a noble spirit of chivalrous loyalty and love of constituted rule. There can be no doubt again, that their adversaries, while none can admire their close and narrow views, and their superstitious adherence to the ill-understood letter of Scripture, yet were endowed with a grand sturdiness and unbending independence of spirit; were men who, first and best of their time, knew and valued the inner testimony of a God-fearing conscience. What has been the result? We have inherited the chivalrous loyalty of the Cavalier, we have inherited the unflinching independence of the Roundhead. The Briton is a strange, but surely a happy compound of the principle of obedience and the principle of resistance.

I might draw further illustration of these remarks from what has happened since the date last referred

to. But time admonishes me to hasten onward ; and besides, I am not writing in order to praise the achievements of our national conscience. I am no optimist in this matter, as will ere long be discovered. It is only that I may have ground to start from, that I state these facts—that I go on to acknowledge our sense of that which the free utterance of the Christian conscience has done for us. There is no use in denying that it has accomplished great benefits in our own times, and that it is going on even now to accomplish more and greater. It spoke, and the fetters dropped from the bondsman ; it spoke, and the lifted weapons of alienated friends fell down powerless, and the vaunted code of worldly honour was torn to shreds amidst the scorn of mankind. It spoke again, and man's ill-judged restrictions no longer denied free course to God's provision of food for the great human family. On another dark place of our national life has its bright light long been turned. Age after age, the hosts of its army of truth have been, as it were, circling the "strong cemented walls" of the fortress of our national intolerance ; year by year battlement and bastion are crumbling down, until at last the ponderous ruin shall fall, and the righteous nation which keepeth the truth shall enter in.

All this I thankfully acknowledge : but I submit

that these are only partial triumphs, only flashes in the midnight, compared with what ought to be, what might be, the result of the spiritual life which is growing and bearing fruit among this great people. Whole realms of thought and action are as yet in utter darkness, as far as any illumination by the Christian conscience is concerned. And this, with the light shining in the midst of them. Look at private life, look at public morality: and what a strange disparity appears. There is, thank God, no lack in our land of the pure clear life of the spirit of man, led in the light of God's countenance, guided by the gentle whisper of His Spirit. Thousands of British families are thus guided, thus travelling, walking on in the Spirit through temptation to victory: Christian parents, Christian lads and girls, Christian children, fearing God, and obeying God.

But where, when we look abroad over public morality, shall we find an exercise of the conscience of this Christian nation, at all in proportion to its undoubted individual and family life? Shall we seek for it in commerce? Where shall we find it, to cite an example from the things of our day, in any public action taken with regard to the stupendous failures occurring through what every Christian man must call by the plain name of dishonesty? Echo may well answer, "Where?" when public walls can re-

ceive, and public assemblies applaud, studied apologies for men who have been well called "high-minded and honourable pickpockets," men who have brought ruin on the unhappy thousands who have been simple enough to trust them. Shall we find the working of the Christian conscience in those who tell us that such evil doers "must not be blown upon," for fear the salvage from their wreck should be lessened?

I wish we were able to say that unprincipled commercial conduct was discouraged and dying out among us. But I much fear that this is far from being the case. I fear that the number of instances is even multiplying, in which the family is upheld in opulence, and is respected and looked up to for high Christian example of charity and good works, while the head of it is increasing the gains whereon this benevolence is fed, by means which he could not justify, and dared not confess.

If we regard public conduct in another great matter of honour and trust, I fear our idea of the power of the Christian conscience among us will hardly be strengthened. It would be difficult of belief if reported in a written history, that the English legislature is continually passing enactments against the practice of bribing electors for their votes, and that a great portion of those who pass these laws deliberately and systematically violate

them every time that the occasion occurs. And on the other hand it would be hardly credited that there are in almost every constituency a certain number of persons, patent to all, and distinctly defined, whose votes are known to be purchasable by money. No one presumes to justify this state of things, yet no one concerned appears really earnest in wishing to put an end to it. That there would be great difficulty in doing so, is not to be alleged in excuse. Conscience, when once awakened, does not stick at difficulties. It is only where a compromise with evil is resolved on, that their existence is put forward to palliate inaction.

But let us raise our eyes higher—from secular to religious life. Let us ask whether in the practice of the churches of this land the Christian conscience speaks clearly and is obeyed.

What is the state of things among us in England? I am asking the question not with any view of passing a criticism on existing arrangements. I take them as accomplished fact—as the basis of what I have to remark. We have in England one form of Church established, and in connection with the State. We have many other forms existing as voluntarily associated bodies; existing by recognised right of the Christian conscience. This recognition has, historically, not been arrived at without considerable

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difficulty, and a struggle which has lasted for ages. Though a legitimate and necessary corollary from the principles of our Reformation, it was not seen to be such by the dominant party, till the course of Providence proved too strong for the self-will of men. We began by persecuting in order to enforce conformity; we advanced to a meagre and ungracious toleration; and, notwithstanding that our nonconforming brethren have now, thank God, acquired equality of civil rights, at this point of ungracious toleration we for the most part remain still. The State has been more recognisant of, more loyal to the Christian conscience, than the Church, which ought to have been its most jealous and watchful guardian. Nothing is more strongly impressed on my mind, when I look over the religious state of England, than that we, who are members of her Established Church, have need to face the whole important question of our relations to Nonconformists, with a view to a re-adjustment, in the light of the Christian conscience, of our words and our acts respecting them. There is a very wide basis of doctrine, there is a still wider basis of Christian morality, on which we are absolutely at one. As far as those bases extend, our aim is identical. We may not be able to work together; our instruments may be different; our tastes may be incompatible. Allow the



utmost force to these considerations ; and the utmost force also to the consideration, that our very differences are themselves points of conscience, and that we are bound to stand up for them, and not to merge nor compromise them. Still, allowing all this, it seems to me that there is no justification for the present alienation of affection, the present virtual suspension of intercourse, the present depreciating tone and manner, which prevail on the part of English Churchmen towards Dissenters, and towards Churches which differ from ourselves in organization. That such a tone does prevail, needs, I suppose, no proof ; but how far it is carried can hardly be imagined but by help of illustration. In the last number but one of a weekly Church newspaper, occurred the following sentence, forming part of a review of a work by Dr. Preuss, a Lutheran divine holding a distinguished academical office in Berlin : “ His position as a member of a body of religionists without the pale of the Catholic Church, naturally places him without the range of the Church’s sympathies.” It would be difficult to say whether the insolence, or the ignorance, of this sentence be the greater, or whether both be not surpassed by its utter opposition to the whole spirit of our Blessed Lord and his Apostles. The confession implied in the words “ without the sympathies of the Church ” is, I need hardly say, a

sign that he who makes it has yet to learn his first lesson in the nature and attributes of that Church of Christ of which he speaks so flippantly. If her sympathies be not with all whom Christ died to save, she has deserted the office to which he appointed her—that of being His body, and the habitation of His Spirit.\*

There lies at the root of all this arrogance a most mischievous, but I grieve to say a widely prevalent fallacy. We of the Church of England have absolutely no right to assume our own form of church government to be the only lawful one, and to look askance upon other forms, whether in England or elsewhere. We have not this right, because we distinctly proclaim, as to all things required of necessity to be believed, an appeal to Holy Scripture; and in Scripture as much, or as little, is found for one form as for another. If depreciation of Nonconformists is excused on the ground of our possessing superior means of education and endowment, then the plea itself involves a violation of the dictates of the Christian conscience; for, if the fact be as stated, it is mainly owing to our having excluded our brethren from the national advantages which we ourselves

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\* An attempt was made in a subsequent number of the paper to explain away the words here stigmatised. Unsuccessful as it was, it testified at least to a wholesome dread of Christian public opinion on the part of the writer.

possess; and it is high time that such exclusion should come to an end.

We have, I conceive, a curious example of the perversion of conscience in the English Church, in the fact that a large and increasing party of her members are at this time agitating for union and intercommunion with the Roman and Eastern Churches, from both of which we are separated by important doctrinal differences—that this desire for union is justified by them on the most solemn grounds, as furnished by the words of our Lord's own intercessory prayer, and yet that no mention whatever is made of any desire for union, on the basis of mutual allowance of differences, with our Christian brethren in the British islands.

I have believed it not out of place to treat of these matters in Scotland, because they affect us all, Churchmen and others, alike. It is impossible, with the present rapid transmission of knowledge by the press, but that such movements as are now going on in the Church of England should excite emotions adverse or favourable in every intelligent mind: as it is also impossible but that the effects of any deadening or awakening of the Christian conscience in the Church of England should be felt, for evil or for good, among other religious bodies also.

Being persuaded of this, I go on to notice one more fact which serves, in my opinion, to show anything but a healthy state of the ecclesiastical conscience among ourselves. It is, that in connection with the High Church movement of the last thirty years, there has sprung up, and has now become widely prevalent, a sort of dealing with words which I know not how to characterise except, again, by the plain epithet "dishonest." The shortest description of this method is, that it consists in interpreting rules and formularies so as to suit a pre-arranged theory, not in accordance with fair dealing and common sense. In many instances of this which might be given, the data whereby to arrive at the true meaning of the words in question were abundant, and sufficient for all men's common sense: it was well known what the framers of the words wished to secure, and what they wished to prevent: to any ordinary ear, their words plainly expressed both; but because those words admit of some far-off and undreamt-of sense, we are called upon to believe that this, and not the meaning which grammar and history alike attach to them, is to be received by us. Simply for the sake of illustrating my meaning, I quote a crucial instance. The framers of the Articles of the Church of England had said that "the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory was a fond, vainly

invented thing.” No man in his senses need be told that their intention was to condemn the doctrine altogether, and that the epithet “Romish” was prefixed in order to identify the doctrine condemned with that commonly known in this country. Not so, said our special pleaders; we will take the words differently: it is the *Romish* doctrine, and no other, which is here stigmatized: therefore if we can find any other doctrine about purgatory which is *not* Romish, that is not here condemned: and by not being condemned, is left open for English Churchmen to hold. As if a man should say that, because the second commandment runs, “Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image,” if a man did not make a graven image to *himself*, but got another man to make it for him, it would be no breach of the commandment. This, which I have quoted, was one of the earliest specimens of the non-conscientious mode of arguing; it occurred in the famous Tract No. 90 of the ‘Tracts for the Times.’ But it is only a fair specimen of the interpretations ever since, and now, put forth in abundance by the same party. As far as regards the interpretations themselves, they might safely be left to the contempt of mankind. The only importance attaching to them is, that they form part of the recognised tactics unblushingly avowed by a powerful body of learned

and able men in our land : and I ask whether this can be the case, without a wide-spreading and baleful effect on the Christian conscience of the realm ? When I see the tortuous and disingenuous advances of the party which adopts these practices, and at the same time contemplate the paralysis of the commercial conscience already noticed, together with those other indications that we know the good and follow the worse, I cannot help feeling that some among us who think that they are doing God's work, and the Church's work, have, and will have, more to answer for than they suspect.

There is another matter, one on which the Christian conscience of all the churches in our realm needs awakening. I mean the duty of bringing our Authorised Version of the Holy Scriptures into closer proximity to the text in which those Scriptures were written. This has become a matter of very serious import. It is now well known to most persons of any information and intelligence, that there are very many passages in which our version either represents a text which is not the genuine one, or misrepresents that genuine text in rendering it. We are reading and preaching on, as the word of God, sayings which are demonstrably no part of that word : we are giving to its texts meanings which any scholar can see they will not bear. We of the Church of

England are using two different versions of the Book of Psalms, in one of which are some verses that yield no assignable sense in themselves, and some, the sense of which flatly contradicts the sense of the corresponding verses in the other version.\* And yet both these versions, the one asserting, the other denying, the same fact, are read and preached from indifferently.

I know it is the custom to depreciate and minimise the importance of these variations and errors. And this is one of the very things of which I complain. I never saw this method of argument followed without very great unfairness. Not to mention that in the esteem of those who set the highest possible value on Scripture, no assignable deviation from its actual meaning ought to be a trifle,—it is distinctly not the fact, that the variations and errors are of slight account. In very many parts of St. Paul's Epistles, the inattention, on the part of our translators, to the force of words and the accuracy of constructions, has rendered the Apostle's argument unintelligible to English readers. And the first duty of a faithful expositor is to assure his hearers, on his own authority, that St. Paul does not say what they

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\* As an example of the former kind: can any acuteness extract sense from Ps. lviii. 8 in the Prayer-book version? As an example of the latter, compare Ps. cv. 28 in the two versions.



read in their Bibles, nor mean what those English words would appear to convey.

Nor can I regard as any more conscientious the miserable argument against touching the Authorised Version, which is often raised on the ground of expediency. There is danger, we are told, in unsettling the minds of those who simply rely on their English Bibles as the word of God. I am amazed at hearing this plea from lips which frequently utter it. For what abuse, for what dereliction of unwelcome duty, may it not be made an apology? And even if we descend to its own cowardly level, and begin to weigh expediencies, which of the two, think you, is the greater danger—manfully to meet the present unsatisfactory state of things by an authorised revision, or to allow a text which we vaunt as the word of God to be continually either held back because it will not bear examination, or brought into doubt and contempt by being disavowed from our pulpits?

And the matter is one not presenting any insuperable difficulty. Let a Royal Commission (for I see no other way of gaining for the new version the same authority as the old possesses)—let a Royal Commission call together the most capable men out of all reformed denominations, and set them on this work, and (I speak from having been engaged in it with others of differing views and habits of mind)



they will be astonished how soon practical terms of agreement will be arranged, and a basis of operations settled. There are few things that I hope and pray for so much as that He who has men's hearts in His hand, would cause the conscience of His Churches to awaken to this their bounden duty. But alas, while I hope and pray, there are few things which I less expect. There seems to have settled down on our Churches such a spirit of secularity and timidity, especially with regard to the treatment of Scripture, that I cannot see the faintest prospect of such a work being undertaken in our time.

And now, in drawing towards a close, I must say something of the Christian conscience in individuals. Let us remember that, the higher and more delicate the organ, the more liable it is to be strained or deranged. And the more so, beyond doubt, if it happen to have been thoroughly put out of order and action before. Now both these are the case with the Christian conscience. It is a limb which has but newly come out of paralysis, but it is a limb which has our whole weight to sustain, and of which the finest and most delicate work is required. No wonder if it be soon enfeebled, soon strained and distorted. It needs training for its work; it needs careful tending, and strict watching. We are accountable for the healthiness of our consciences, and have no right to

play tricks with, or to neglect them. We are far too apt to forget that conscience is not a vague, ever-shifting thing, but is judged by the fixed rule of God's revealed will. One man's conscience, he supposes, leads him to persecution; another man's conscience leads him to charity. In this extreme case, perhaps, few of us would maintain that both were right: but in cases quite as plain if fairly regarded, we do continually maintain this. We suffer ourselves quite to forget that saying of Scripture, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." And even while we are quoting and urging this fact, we frequently behave as if we thought men's consciences, and especially our own, infallible. It must be plain to all that the general practical issue of this last consideration ranges very wide. But so far as it affects us individually, its lesson is soon stated. And that lesson is, self-distrust, and its two great fruits, modesty and charity. We are very apt to be overconfident in matters of conscience. We have been brought up to think this or that; or, we have for ourselves, independently of our bringing up, arrived at this or that conclusion. Therefore, we say—and the young mind is especially apt to say it—therefore my view is right, and I will make it matter of conscience, and nothing on earth shall stir me from

it. It is a sore temptation, and a grievous hindrance of usefulness, this starting in life with decided opinions. Show me a young man whose views and maxims are all cut and dried, and I will show you one whose years of strength will be spent, at the best, in getting rid bit by bit of his sham wisdom; who will not be ready for Providence's work, till his more modest compeers have half done their allotment of it. Conscience has its duties as well as its rights; and its first duty is towards itself. It is set to rule us, not despotically, but constitutionally; not by strong arbitrary commands, but by mature and well-grounded decisions, given according to the laws of our nature, and the leadings of Revelation and Providence. It is just as much trifling with conscience to obey its fitful whispers when it grumbles about trifles, as it is to disregard its voice when it warns us in more serious matters. Its healthiest discipline is to be found in the exercise of plain manly common sense.

And as this is true of all times, so is it especially of our time. In many cases our views of men and things are too artificial. I was struck the other day with the parting word of one of the excellent American bishops who have been with us this autumn. My friend is what is called a missionary bishop—one whose work it is to travel for months over the wilds of Arkansas, and set up

prayer and preaching where neither was ever heard before. He had been some days my guest, and as we walked to the train which was to take him away, he said, "I'll tell you what would do you a vast deal of good, and that's two thousand miles with me in my buggy. You here are too civilised by half; you want some good honest barbarism put into you, and you would get along a vast deal better."

Good honest barbarism: that is, I suppose, a way of looking at things themselves direct, and not through the mist of eight centuries of institutions. Well, I believe we do want some of this kind of barbarism; only we can't get it *as* barbarism; we can't put back the historical clock, nor can we make the stream of Providence run upwards to its source. We must get at the result by simple honesty and single purpose; by a casting off of timidity and time-serving, and being bold for truth; by ourselves going back, in every social and religious question, past the mere runnel-pipes of sect and precedent, up to the fountain-heads in God's everlasting hills.

I must apologise for having dwelt so much on the more serious, and I fear less generally interesting, portions of my subject. That subject might have been taken in various social aspects, and illustrated by incidents of our daily life. I might have brought before my readers the constant and admitted petty

breaches of the rule of conscience, in which we live, and by which most of us suffer. Which of us, if he thought honestly over the day, could go to bed at night quite clear of having dealt hardly with some neighbour's reputation, of having exaggerated some fault of a friend, or extenuated some fault of his own?

We might also have noticed faults which we call by the somewhat milder epithet "unconscionable;" and among them, the inroads on time and on good nature daily and relentlessly perpetrated by average men and women:—the case of the "won't detain you a moment" man, who is sure to occupy half your morning; the platform speaker, whose "one word more and I have done," is the sure prelude to a dreary half hour of incoherent platitudes; the preacher who, though he knows that half an hour would be better for his people, for himself, and for his subject, yet somehow always gives them three-quarters. We might have satirized those numerous little compromises with the thing that is not, which are spread thick over our habits of visiting and greeting one another; those lies to which I can only concede the epithet "white," inasmuch as they certainly are unblushing. We might have dwelt, one by one, on those pious frauds and one-sided representations prevalent among our religious coteries,

whereby the same honest zeal, if it happens to be with us, is made out to be angelic, if against us, diabolic.

All these, and many other of our weaknesses and inconsistencies, would have to be touched on in any full treatment of my present subject. I thought it best to put that subject before my hearers in what I believed to be its true position, to give them its definitions and laws, and to illustrate them by a few of the graver examples furnished by passing things.

Whether what I have spoken be approved or disapproved, if it shall have excited thought and inquiry on so serious a matter, my object will have been gained.



IV.

THE UNION OF CHRISTENDOM  
CONSIDERED IN ITS HOME ASPECT.

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WHAT can be more desirable, a consummation more to be hoped and prayed for, than the union of Christendom? So we feel at first sight of the words; so we feel after long pondering on them, and appreciating their depths and their difficulties.

In the interest, then, of the fulfilment of these hopes and prayers, we would place on record some of these our ponderings. We are the more induced to do so, because it seems to us that many in our time have taken up the words without any such pondering, and are striving after their realization in fact, in a manner which may prove rather a hindrance than a help.

What is Christendom? What is union? These are two preliminary questions, without some discussion of which it seems to us vain to expatiate on the

subject. We must clearly know with what material it is purposed to deal, and with that material how it is purposed to deal, before we can pronounce the manipulation either possible or desirable.

I. *What is Christendom?* Let us face the question at once. Is Christendom the agglomeration of Episcopal Churches throughout the world, or do its limits extend further? The former view seems to be that of our friends who are professedly working for union at present. In their estimation the *sine quâ non* of a Christian Church is Episcopal government, and Episcopal government with a traceable succession from the ancient Catholic times. Now, if the question were asked of us, as Churchmen, which of all forms we, in our conscience, believe to be the best one and the right one, our answer would probably be given in these very terms. But let it be carefully observed that that is not the question now at issue. We suppose that the man is hardly to be found who would seriously maintain that a mode of Church government is an essential to salvation. We say, *seriously* maintain. For that there are those who hold it as their theory, and in argument inflexibly keep to the position, that all grace comes to the individual soul at the hands of a ministry descending in formal succession from the Apostles, and so from our Lord Himself, we are perfectly aware. But there is

an immense difference between what a man inflexibly maintains as his theory, and that to which he is driven in his serious moments, when his heart is laid open, and Truth looks in on him with her irresistible power.

It was once the lot of the present writer to introduce into a large clerical society, meeting monthly for discussion, the question, whether an orthodox Dissenter (using, of course, the term *orthodox* in its well-understood sense, as applied to Christian doctrine) is to be regarded as a member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church? It seemed to him very necessary that his fellow-members should be "brought to book" respecting this matter. Some of them were very high Churchmen, and were in the habit of speaking on it as the clergy of that school usually do—viz., of designating as "outside the Church" all their Non-conformist countrymen, and all non-Episcopal, and some of the Episcopal, foreign religious bodies. At the same time, it was a patent fact that the families of some of these very men were Dissenters, and equally patent that when any members of those families were spoken of by them, it was always as Christians, as living a Christian life, and dying in Christian hope.

Here then was an inconsistency which obviously wanted clearing up—which could only be cleared up,

as it seemed to the proposer of the question, in one way—viz., by the abandonment of the high exclusive view in theory, as it was already abandoned in practice. The debate lasted far into the evening, and was adjourned to a second monthly meeting. At that meeting it was at last carried unanimously in the affirmative, that the Dissenter, holding the articles of the Christian faith, is to be regarded as a member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. And I may mention that among those affirmative votes was that of one who very shortly afterwards left us for the Church of Rome. *Magna erat veritas, et prævalebat.* When men came once to look this question in the face, and to bring it to the test of their own consciences,—of their verdict over the holy lives and hopeful deaths of their friends and neighbours,—the artificial barriers fell, and the righteous nation which keepeth the truth entered in. The only true test triumphed—that propounded for us by Our Master,—By their *fruits* (not by their hierarchies) shall ye know them.

This was seventeen years ago. How such a debate might *now* terminate is, perhaps, doubtful. But any other decision than that at which we arrived is, I submit, impossible to the fair-judging Christian mind. If the term "Christendom" is to be interpreted by facts, and not by a theory prior to facts, it must

include those bodies of professing Christians at home whom we call Nonconformists : it must also include those foreign Churches whose form of government differs from our own.

I said, if the term is to be interpreted by facts. But many will say, in such a matter we have not to do with facts, but with a traditional belief, and with laws and canons of the Church. I answer, that with regard to the former of these, the fact of a general traditional belief on such a matter may appear to us a sufficient reason why we ourselves should, in our Church arrangements, conform to it. But by the very conditions which our own branch of the Church sets forth in her Articles, no mere traditional belief, even were it up to a certain time universal among Christians, is to be required of any man as necessary to his salvation, or, which is the same thing, as a requisite of his membership of the Church Catholic. In order to constitute a belief thus necessary, it must be capable of proof out of Holy Scripture ; and however it may be evident as matter of fact, “unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles’ time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ’s Church, bishops, priests, and deacons,”\* none will, we pre-

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\* Preface to the Ordination Service, Common Prayer Book.

sume, be bold enough to maintain that such three forms are laid down in Holy Scripture as essential for the Church. So far is this from being the case, that the “bishops” of the later New Testament Epistles have hardly anything in common with the Church officers which have since borne that name, but were merely presbyters, as is acknowledged by the early Christian fathers. In Acts xx. we read that St. Paul, passing by Miletus, sent for the elders (presbyters) of the Church at Ephesus. In his address to them he admonishes them to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them *bishops*; for the word “overseers” here found in our English version is one of those pieces of disingenuousness by which its text is, though rarely, yet sometimes undeniably, disfigured. Again, in Phil. i. 1, St. Paul addresses his Epistle to the saints at Philippi, “with the bishops and deacons,” where Theodoret observes, “he calls the presbyters bishops; for at that time they had both names.” There is, it is true, in the pastoral Epistles—probably the latest, except one, of the New Testament writings—an apparently closer approximation to the superintending office of our present bishop; but not a word, there or anywhere, of that or any other particular form of Church arrangement being universally prescribed. If such prescription had been met with, of course it would

be binding upon Christendom; but now that such prescription is not met with, no usage of the Apostles, no subsequent practice, however widespread, can close up or prescribe that which Scripture has left open. It is very probable—we hold it to be certain—that the safeguard of the individual conscience is more effectual for the good government of the Churches than that of the collective conscience; but to this general rule there might be exceptions, and this widespread opinion might not be held by all. Again, the Apostles made their arrangements for a particular time and condition of things; we have no right to say that they themselves would have enforced the same arrangements on other ages and in the presence of differing circumstances. Indeed they seem, even during the short period covered by the canonical Epistles, to have departed, at least in some instances, from their first ecclesiastical dispositions. So that we cannot concede any right to either the traditional belief, or the common practice of the Church Catholic, to enforce episcopal government as one essentially requisite. If any portion of the Church, in coming out of the corruptions of Rome, or out of subsequent corruptions of faith and practice in any reformed communion, had reason to believe that Episcopacy in that particular case had stood in the way of the work of God's Spirit on mankind, it



had a perfect right to abandon episcopal for presbyterian government : it was not thereby removed a whit farther from the Scripture model of a Church ; and we, however much we may differ from its conclusion, and deplore the step it took, have absolutely no right whatever to look depreciatingly on it as a branch of Christ's Church ; still less may we presume to unchurch and unchristianise its members : they are in the direct and legitimate exercise of the sacred rights of the Christian conscience. And let it not be cast in our teeth, or in theirs, that they are guilty of the sin of schism. Whether they are so guilty or not, is a question bearing not on them only, but on us Churchmen also. If in consequence of offence given to them by laxity of life and morals, we drove them to seek Christian purity in separation from us ; if, by ignorance of the first principles of Christian charity, we persecuted them when we ought to have stood rebuked by them, then the sin of schism lay at our doors, not at theirs. To say that now, when they have a succession of ages and a traditional Church-belief of their own, they are schismatics, is a height of folly and pedantry, which it would be difficult to believe any intelligent mind to have arrived at, did we not see it far too often exemplified.

And this brings us to the second rule, with which it was supposed that in this matter we have to do,



rather than with facts; viz., the laws and canons of the Church. Here we are met by what we cannot avoid again calling a pedantic, and at the same time a capricious, view of the subject. The pedantry of the view is found in this—that it insists on applying, to an actual conjuncture of manifest gravity, rules enacted with reference to a state of things having nothing in common with the time now present; rules, the framers of which never contemplated our difficulties,—never heard the call of God's Providence which summons us to action. To fall back upon such rules now, by way of discouraging those who would serve God in their own generation, is to be “unwise,” not “understanding what the will of the Lord is;” which conduct, as we believe, is of the very essence of pedantry, and that of the worst kind.

But this view of the subject is also one admitting of any unassigned degree of caprice and arbitrariness. Of the particular rules which they who hold it press on us, by far the greater portion has become obsolete and impossible. The burden of them is, “let him be excommunicated.” Why is not this done? Simply because it is impossible. Because, if it were in any one case attempted, the whole land would ring with indignation, and a storm would be raised which might bring down in ruin the outward fabric of the Church. Well then, if the aspect of things, and the public

opinion of a Christian people, have thus far altered, are we to assume that the Church which once said, "let him be excommunicated," has learnt no wisdom, but remains where she was in spite of this immense change? What has operated the change? What, disguise it as we will,\*but the conviction, deep as the inward sense of right—real as the daily grounds of thought and life—that Christianity is wider than Church hierarchies and canons ecclesiastical; that the Church Catholic is made up, not of those bounded by a certain pale of artificial barriers, but of those who, in the language of a well-known definition by the Church herself, "profess and call themselves Christians"?

But, besides that the hard *canonical* view is both pedantic and capricious, it possesses a peculiar demerit of its own, from the circumstances under which it is held. There can be no reasonable doubt that if the Church of England could be assembled in any fairly representative body, lawfully empowered to deal with her canons, the whole of this mass of illiberal rules would be ere long swept away. That the body which assumes to represent her is not so empowered, is fact of which none are ignorant. Few also can be ignorant, that the last thing which Convocation is likely under present circumstances to represent, is the collective public opinion of English Churchmen.

That assembly is for the most part delivered over to the guidance of the assertors of exclusive sacerdotalism, against whom the general feeling of the members of the Church is in open rebellion. But it is not sufficiently known that, if anything like the whole of the members of the Lower House thought it worth while to attend in their places, the minorities which now in vain oppose the dictation of the High Church party would be transformed into triumphant majorities. It is mainly owing to the apathy of the so-called Evangelical party, and to their want of appreciation of the importance, even at present, of the decisions of Convocation, that the priestly movement at home and in the colonies is able to cite the official voice of the Church of England in its favour.

And is this a time, I would ask, to be throwing us back upon canonical rules more than two centuries old, and to be requiring the Church to stamp on herself the brand of folly, and of incapacity to do her duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call her? If in this and in some other respects her position be of necessity a false one; if at every step she require compromises and charitable interpretations to enable her to act, or even to exist at all, why should not those compromises be made for the benefit of her fellow Christians, as well as for her own? Why should not those charitable construc-

tions be yielded to the love of her neighbour, which she is ever eager to accept for the love of herself ?

I shall assume therefore, that we are called on to deal at the present day, not with theories, nor with traditional beliefs as to Church government, but with facts as we find them. I will proceed then to inquire what those facts are, as far as they concern our present question.

The Christianity of this our land is made up of the Church of England, comprising perhaps rather the larger half (?) of her inhabitants, and of many sects of Nonconformists. Among these latter, Roman Catholics are of course included, though, from their peculiar position, they belong to our present inquiry as a foreign rather than as a British denomination. Taking facts again, and not theory, as our index to character, Roman Catholics have really now become an Italian sect, inasmuch as their visible Head must always be an Italian, and, by the newly-proclaimed tenet of Ultramontaniam, must rule as a temporal prince over a portion of Italy. They have, by this regulation and this doctrine, for all purposes of strict inquiry as to the limits of Christendom, receded from an œcumenical into a local position. Dwelling in Britain, they must always be the spiritual subjects of an Italian prince ; and the union of Christendom in its home aspect does not concern them, or concerns

them only remotely. And even were this otherwise, there would be another reason why Roman Catholics cannot in such an inquiry be taken into consideration. With them, union implies absorption. Their position with reference to any accord between Churches differing in government would be simply antagonistic. That this is so as matter of practice at the present time, was clearly shown by the correspondence between the English promoters of what is called the union of Christendom, and the existing authorities at Rome. From these latter they got, as they always will get on every application for recognition, the curtest and severest answer:—"Our arms are open to receive you; nothing hinders your union with us but your own folly and obstinacy; other way to the union of Christendom we know not. God bring you to a better mind:" in substance, by the way, the same reply as the nonjurors were favoured with from the "orthodox" Greek Church, when they made a similar proposal.

For these reasons we are compelled, not by inclination of ours, but by unvarying action of their own, to pass over the Roman Catholics in our present inquiry.

But as regards the rest, we have a very large portion of the Nonconforming bodies divided from us by the thinnest possible partition, as far as theolo-

gical doctrine is concerned. The Church of England has long used their hymns: their printed sermons and works on divinity rank, in not a few cases, high in our classical theology. In sacred learning and biblical exposition and criticism, it may be questioned whether their present average attainment be not above our own. If we descend from the leaders to the people, none, I suppose, would presume, in the matter of blameless walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, to set ourselves above them. As to the share which each have borne in moral and social improvements, I imagine all will allow that they have oftener led us than they have been led by us. Their united missionary efforts far exceed our own. In schools, in charities, in good works of every kind, they have been our honourable, and not seldom our successful rivals. Considering the amount of discouragement and disparagement which they have had, and still have to undergo, the progress of education and cultivation among Nonconformists is one of the most wonderful, as it is one of the most satisfactory phenomena of our time.

In estimating then the elements of that Christendom for whose union we hope and pray, I submit that we have no right to refuse to include—we have no right to overlook—these vast bodies of Christians



who surround us at home. But a question here comes forward, and requires an answer. We have spoken of a very large number of Nonconformists whose doctrinal differences from ourselves are slight. But when we advance beyond that number, we are met by the inquiry, How far are we to carry our inclusion?

Now this is evidently a question not to be hastily dismissed, as it would be by the rigid Churchman on the one side, and the Latitudinarian on the other. First of all, we must be careful to ascertain *what doctrine is*: and then we must also be careful how we proceed in laying down its limits.

*What doctrine is.* For there are not a few who would be disposed to make Church government itself into doctrine; there are more who would charge with doctrinal error those who do not hold Church ordinances, or who, in their view, practise them amiss. The instances easily occurring to all are the Baptists and the Quakers. The former reject Infant Baptism; the latter reject both Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Now the whole practical system of the Church of England is based on the baptismal covenant, entered by the child, and accepted by the young person at confirmation. In the view of that Church, "regeneration" of necessity accompanies the act of baptism, and from the time of that act



passing on any person he or she is regarded as “a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” She also holds the other Sacrament, in which “the faithful verily and indeed partake of the body and blood of Christ,” to be, like baptism, generally necessary to salvation; and charges all her members to receive it three times in the year at the least. Now all this bears strong similarity to doctrine; and yet none of it *is* doctrine, in the strict sense of the word with which we are now concerned. We may believe, and we do believe, the Baptist and the Quaker to be misguided in their judgments, and to be acting inconsistently with the implied mind of our Lord and his Apostles, in thus setting aside, or in thus wrongly administering, the Christian Sacraments. But, notwithstanding this error in judgment, notwithstanding this (to us) apparent disregard of Scripture, the Baptist and the Quaker may hold every article in the Creeds as firmly as we do; the “one baptism for the remission of sins” of course receiving at the hands of the latter a spiritual meaning, as the text would receive on which the article is founded.

So far, I should conceive, there would—supposing the way cleared of preliminary objections *in toto* to all differers—be no great difficulty. The extension thus won for our definition of Christendom would

now include all holding the co-equality of the Persons in the Blessed Trinity, the atonement by Christ's death and resurrection, and the action of the sanctifying Spirit on those who believe in Him.

But here comes the real difficulty—the difficulty at which every attempt at general inclusion has found itself arrested, and has been compelled either to shut the door, or to incur imputations fatal to its acceptance by the Christian world. And the difficulty is, how to deal in the case of those who deny any of the articles of the faith, in which all hitherto in view are agreed. Of course, this notably bears on one body of religionists—those somewhat curiously known as *Unitarians*.

It will be hardly necessary, after what has already been said, for the present writer to guard himself against being supposed for one moment to depreciate the magnitude of the contrast between the Catholic Christian and the denier of the Divinity of our Lord. Nothing less is at issue in this difference than the *whole* of the Christian faith, as understood by any of those who have been hitherto in our view. But our present inquiry does not concern any discussion of this contrast. It may remain in all its incompatibility, unaltered in any man's view by the issue of our inquiry. That issue will be the affirmation or the negation of the question—Is that body of reli-

gionists who, in some sort holding Christ, yet overstep the limits of the creeds which the Church has deduced from Scripture, to be accounted a part of Christendom?

It will assist us in this inquiry if we make another, simply of matter of fact; and it is this: What latitude of doctrine are we allowing, at this moment, within the English Church herself? Because it seems to me that this is the proper measure within which, at all events, we have no right to narrow our recognition of Christians without. That liberty which, in spite of articles and canons and ecclesiastical courts, we permit to Churchmen, we can hardly, in fairness, deny to Dissenters. And, if I am not mistaken, anything like a fair reply to this last inquiry must be such as to cause any honest man to drop the stone which he had lifted to throw at the Unitarian.

The fact seems to be this, that you cannot bound Christendom by a doctrinal test. You may bound certain Churches, you may limit certain sects, by such a test; even then, when the power of the test is tried in any really doubtful case, it almost universally fails. We want for Christendom a fact, not a doctrine, as the test of inclusion. And we are thus driven back to the definition before alluded to as furnished us by the Church herself, when she ex-

plains "the good estate of the Catholic Church" to be attained by "all who profess and call themselves Christians, being led into the way of truth." Christendom is as wide as the Christian name; as wide as the recognition of Christ as Master. Let each portion of it, as conscience dictates, defend truth and protest against error; but no portion of it has right to exclude or to unchurch another.

II. If this be Christendom, then, secondly, *what is union?* The answer generally given is, that it is that state of mutual recognition which is symbolized by *intercommunion*—a word itself, we fancy, coined to serve the purpose of this union movement. But it may be suggested that, though intercommunion may be most desirable as a pledge of union, it must not be considered as the object to be aimed at in striving for union. For it requires both too much and too little;—too much; for there may be that in the customs of one Church which may be distasteful to another Church, while yet Christian union may be set up and maintained between them: and too little; for the rites of two Churches may be almost coincident as mere matter of form, while the attitude and animus of the two may be substantially antagonistic. It is plain that intercommunion will be rather an accident, than the substance, of the union of which we are treating.

And the same reasoning may be carried further, and extended even to all formal acts of recognition. If any such formal act is to be set up as that without which union is not, and that on which union follows as matter of course, we shall have made the same double mistake. A formal recognition may be inadmissible, in cases where union may be easy and obvious; a formal recognition may be, from concurrent circumstances, easy and apparently satisfactory, and yet no true union may follow.

These considerations lead up to the inference, that the union of which we are in search will consist not so much in outward acts, as in the state of feeling and temper of Christian bodies one towards another. It will then have begun to set in here in England, when all disparaging thoughts of a man in consequence of his religious denominational position shall have ceased; when *we* shall have learned to treat the fact of a man's being an Independent or a Wesleyan as no reason for distrusting him or shunning his company; when the Dissenter, on the other hand, shall have forborne railing at us by reason of the apparent ground of vantage which we possess in being the Established Church of the nation, and shall surcease from his endeavours to misrepresent and subvert us.

To expect such a time to arrive, may be thought

somewhat chimerical. But it may not be altogether profitless to have indicated at least a desire for its arrival. At all events, this paper will serve as a protest, in the name of the Christian spirit, and the spirit of fair dealing, against the present attempts at formal union with Churches abroad, while the Christian bodies at home are left entirely out of the question.

It may be asked, whether it would be possible or desirable to aim at marking the union of Christendom at home by any outward symbol? As we said before, we would not have such symbol to be considered as of the essence of the union itself. It would merely be a sign of its existence, tending to carry its reality to the hearts and the senses of those who partook in it.

There can, we think, be very little doubt that any who are prepared to sympathize with what has been said would regard such a symbolical act as *desirable*. The profession of good feeling, even if genuine, needs some outward occasion on which it may be reduced to a great and tangible fact; and the habit of kind words and charitable thoughts requires stimulus to prevent it from falling into a *mere* habit.

If then an outward symbolic act would be desirable, have we any reason to think that such an act would be possible? It is obvious that we must not look for

an answer to this inquiry in the direction of that which is commonly known as *inter-communion*. For we should thus at once come face to face with difficulties arising out of the constitutions and liturgical biases of the various Churches; and a concession, by way of *compromise*, would have to be made,—a necessity which we wish to avoid.

But though *inter-communion* may be out of the question, might not the highest of Christian ordinances be so administered, by the abstention of each body from the use of its own liturgical forms, as to include all who interpret the command of our Lord as the institution of an ordinance at all? Suppose, at all events, that the commemorative portion of that ordinance were shared by an assembly of various denominations of Christians,—the only words heard being the Scripture narrative of its institution, and then bread and wine being administered in silence.

Of course such a proposition would meet with no favour from—nay, would probably strike with horror—those who believe the virtue of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to consist in the liturgical form, or, in other words, in the priestly consecration of the elements. But, seeing that such a belief would probably be commensurate with the view of the constitution of the Church which is held by the opponents of the whole spirit of this paper, it would introduce no new



element of opposition, and requires therefore no special notice, except it be to say, that any such view of the efficacy of the Holy Communion is totally unsupported by Scripture, and that, consequently, even should we hold it ourselves, we have no right to require it to be held by another.

So that, even supposing this to be our view, we might yet find a way to the symbolical act of union. It would be this : that each body, or as many as thought good, might use such previous liturgical service as they might think fit, and that the administration might take place at one time and spot, each, or again, as many as thought fit, using the words belonging to their own liturgical form.

Either of these, or some other method which might easily be devised, would serve to unite those whose hearts were already predisposed, in a symbolical act of union. It was the fortune of the present writer to witness such an act of union performed in two different ways at Berlin, in 1857. The first time, exactly as described above, in silence, and with no words but the reading of the institution by our Lord : the second time, by administration to the members of each Church in the words used by each Church, without, however, any previous act of consecration. It then appeared to him that the former method was by far the more effectual as a symbol of union. The



abstention of all from even the forms which they dearly valued, and their meeting on the common ground of the solemn narrative of Holy Writ, seemed to carry with it the reality of their serious and incompatible differences, and the reality also of the One Word of truth to which all appealed ; seemed to utter at the same time a confession of the fallibility of the Churches, and the infallibility of God's Word. It might be worth considering, whether the recitation of the Apostles' Creed, or, if thought better, of some declaration of belief made in the words of Scripture itself, might not form part of the act of union.

It would be matter of further inquiry, whether under any, and if so, then under what circumstances, the pulpits of one Christian body should be opened to teachers of another. It is obvious that such liberty, though it may seem a legitimate corollary from what has gone before, would require the most jealous guarding and watching. It must be strictly confined to its exceptional character, and never allowed to become customary, nor of course in any case to extend beyond exhortation from the pulpit. In the Church of England, the morning sermon is so strictly bound into the Liturgy, as to form part of the Communion office. For this reason, even were the above-mentioned license given, the morning should be exempted, and reserved without exception for her own

ordained ministers. It will arise to every mind, but is necessary to be stated, as supplementary to any such proposal, that for every case, as it arises, special license, *pro hac vice*, should be required from the bishop of the diocese, with whom it would rest to obtain such satisfactory proofs of soundness in doctrine, and such undertaking to respect the differences between the Churches, as he might think necessary or expedient.\* Probably any such admission might be found in practice undesirable. But it may not be amiss to have at least indicated a desire that it should be in some cases given. I have read Nonconformist sermons, which have begotten in me the wish that they could have been delivered to our congregations, and could have served both to stimulate our somewhat languid preaching, and to set us an example of earnest, and at the same time careful thought. The practice would not be altogether a new one, even in our own times. I have understood that Mr. Venn and Mr. Simeon were in the habit of preaching in the pulpits of the Established Church of Scotland; and the present writer knows of two occasions on which the offer of the parish pulpit in Scotland has

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\* It will be of course understood, but may be stated for fear of mistake, that incompatibility of doctrine, as in the case of the Unitarian, would of necessity prove a bar to such admission.

been made to, though it was not accepted by, a minister of the Church of England.

But it may be well to conclude with an indication of a course already and easily practicable. The manifestation of private social sympathy is in every one's power. It is in every one's power also, to lay aside all those disparaging epithets and insinuations which unfortunately are now so plentifully cast about in the discourse of Churchmen with reference to Dissenters. It is also in every one's power to banish denominational jealousies in commercial dealings. Of course those of the *clergy* who do these acts of Christian justice, or any of them, must make up their minds to incur the bitterest obloquy at the hands of the exclusive High Church party. The agents and the journals of that, as of every other extreme party, are perfectly unscrupulous, and will not hesitate to call in question their Churchmanship and their soundness in the faith. There is nothing in the eyes of that party more unpardonable than the following out, with regard to non-episcopal Christian communities, of the principles of the Church of England. They are well aware how entirely they themselves are in opposition to those principles. They know that the Church of England has again and again, by her Convocations, accorded to those bodies the name of

Churches ; and that the best and most approved of her writers have declared Episcopacy to be not essential to the being of a Church.\* Knowing these things, and keeping them in the background, they trust to being able to bluster down those who are more consistent Churchmen than themselves.

But it is at length, we believe, beginning to be felt, that bluster is not proof ; and that the advocates of common fairness, and of Christian charity, ought to be granted a hearing. In this belief we have ventured to put together the foregoing remarks. It seemed to us that, while to the superficial observer the Church of England is casting off her moorings, and drifting back to Romanism, there is in the hearts of the great mass of her children the earnest wish to make her faster than ever to the Rock which has for three centuries held her safe. We Churchmen yearn, as much as any can, for the union of Christendom ; but we will not seek it by reaching out the hand to distant Churches, while we are fostering disunion at home. When we can say to them “ Look once more at the sects into which you charge us with being split ; behold them, while maintaining the differences incident to freedom of thought, cemented together

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\* Some of the most remarkable of these testimonies may be found cited in the telling and authoritative reply of the Archbishop of Armagh to Archdeacon Denison, inserted in the ‘ Guardian ’ of January 1, 1868.

by the unity of the Spirit of our common Master ;"—when we can challenge them to witness our success in having reconciled the rights of conscience with the mind that was in Christ,—then also we may say to them "Unite with us, be followers of us." Then it may be, some of them on their side may be given to reply, "We will go with them, for God is with them of a truth."

V.

CHARITY, THE END OF THE COMMANDMENT.

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A SERMON PREACHED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY ON THE  
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, JUNE 14, 1868.

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“The end of the Commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”—1 Tim. i. 5.

THE end of the Commandment. These words, my brethren, fall on us at this time with a peculiar force. The former half of another Christian year has gone by. From the manger at Bethlehem to the cloud that rose from Bethany, from the voices of the prophets in Advent to the crowning doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the whole drama of the glorious history, the whole system of resulting truth, has been once more before us. And all is summed up for us in the one word—“the Commandment.” God’s voice to man, beginning in Eden, continuing through all the strivings of the Divine Spirit with our spirit, seems to the Apostle as he writes, one Commandment, one great injunction laid upon man by his Maker : the many voices constitute but one utterance, the thousands of years are but one moment.



Now it is a blessed thing to be able thus to regard the Divine dealings with man. God is one, God's dealings are one, God's words are one. "A covenant," says this same Apostle, "is not a covenant of one, but God is one."\* It is a difficult saying, but we may take it on its easy side, and use it for our purpose. In the great process of God towards us, there are not two kinds of terms, two minds, two propositions. All that has looked like this has been but transitory, has been only for teaching and for symbol: but God is one. His self-manifestation to man is one, not many. The populous outer world, that sets forth to us his handy work—the variously written books that declare to us His will—the many-coloured histories that record for us His Providence, each of these in itself is one, and all of these together are one, proceeding from, declaring, revealing, one consistent and unbroken course of will and action.

It is not possible always to see this unity, nor is it easy always to believe in it. We live among a thousand breaks and inconsistencies, and our vision cannot reach high enough to perceive the point where these all run into one. And so they who have little faith see nothing but the breaks and

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\* Gal. iii. 20.

inconsistencies, and believe at random, and despair of anything better. But it was for the very purpose of assuring to us men this unity in all His dealings with us, that God revealed Himself by Jesus Christ: that He might gather together in one all things in Him: that in Christ Jesus there might not be many distinctions, but that in Him all might be one. "In Him," says this same Apostle,\* "God's promises (which are, as revealed to us, the measure of His purposes) are not yea and nay, but all are yea and amen," all in harmony, and ratified for ever.

So that to believe in this absolute unity, this whereby all God's will is to us "the Commandment," is of the essence of our Christian faith. And of all times ought it to dwell on our minds now, when we have again gone through the whole great process of our Redemption. All those events, and all that they brought about, are one, and there is one word that interprets them all. That one word, hardly longer than the name whereby we call Him, is at the root of every act, every word, every revelation of God. "God is love," in all He does. The bright golden thread is not, again, always apparent to us, looking at his dealings from beneath. And sometimes it is hard enough even to believe its presence.

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\* 2 Cor. i. 20.

Stand in the darkness under the cross at Golgotha, behold the Divine Victim bowing to His death of cruelty and shame. Is that love? Can that be in unity with the acts of Him whose tender mercies are over all His works? Nay, thus much were a small thing to say. That agony, that yielding up the righteous soul of the Son of God, is the very centre and key of all God's love. Herein, herein chiefly and of all other examples, *is love*: this was the choicest fruit and the fullest outpouring of the Father's great love to man—the means whereby man, in his waywardness, his rebellion, his guilt, might become reconciled to God. Well, then, in the full consciousness, and in the blessed spirit of this unity, looking at God's law and Christ's Gospel as one Commandment, let us see what is the end, the purpose, of that manifestation of God to us.

*“The end of the Commandment is charity,” “is love.”*

Now, taking the declaration in its simplicity, and looking out over the Christian world, we are disposed, simply enough on our part perhaps, to say, What a pity it is that people do not oftener ask themselves amidst all their conscientious observance of Christianity, and all their life-long toil to do their duty by it, whereunto it all tends: what is the one general effect which He who ordained Christianity

as a great Commandment for us, intended it to produce? For it seems to me that this is not, or at all events is not commonly, done. Look at the lives, listen to the words, of earnest faithful men and women. A noble utterance here, a blessed act of self-denial there, a firm testimony to great doctrines when it was required, these we may find; but is it not true that the lives of most religious people are but a heap of scattered efforts, the reachings of a hand in the dark, the utterances of thoughts without a centre, the glitterings of unstrung jewels shed upon the ground? Mark the man as life goes on, and gray hairs gather upon him: follow him into his business, listen to him in society: what has the advancing Christian of our day gained by his Christianity? Here it has been for years. Blameless at school, blameless in 'prentice life, or in college life, constant at prayer in chamber and at church, having the pure heart, cherishing the good conscience, living by the faith unfeigned, wherein has he grown, whereby can men take ever more and more certain note of him, that he has been all these years with Jesus?

Surely this is one of the great faults of our time, that we do not find any given end of the Commandment notably served in men who have been all their lives in the practice of it: that men and women

move about among us, of whom we know that they have long been eminent in the Church of Christ, who are looked up to as examples and lights of the religious life, and yet they are none the better for all this, their temper none the sweeter, their words none the gentler, their acts none the more considerate to others.

And one of the chief reasons why Christianity is so much called in question in these days, so much pulled to pieces and cavilled at, is, that it is not seen producing effect on society and on the members of society. We talk about our pure and apostolical faith in this land : we call it a high privilege, evermore to go close up to the fountains themselves and draw : the open Bible, the holy words of the loving One, the fervent sayings of His Apostles, heard in every household, taught to every child, these are the boasts which rise from our pulpits and our platforms. But men are beginning to ask what is the use of this familiarity with the person of Christ, if it does not make us like Christ ? And where is the profit of an apostolical faith, if it takes no note of apostolical example ?

And the eye naturally turns to others than us, who take their Christianity lower down, and who have surrendered to earthly authorities that freedom of judgment which we so jealously guard : and

men see, or they seem to see, more visible effect produced for the faith and for the toil; they think they find tempers more subdued, spirits more calmed, livelier lives, more saintly devotion; and the consequences are, with those who cannot see through nor appreciate the truth of things, error, and perhaps defection; and with those who can, an indifferent contempt for all forms of that religion which cannot, in its purity, mould a man's life to its image, and which, if it have any effect, is obliged to borrow it from lower motives and meretricious influences.

My brethren, these things ought not so to be. We have been a land of reformed churches long enough, to have made very visible progress towards the end and purpose of our faith, if it have an end and purpose. If we have not done so, it behoves us to stand and consider our ways.

And God has given us plenty of light in this matter to consider them by. It is not as if all were darkness: it is not as if over the broad world Christianity had failed of its effect. Viewed on the large scale, as an influence over nations, over the great international and supranational maxims which rule mankind, Christianity has, in the ages since the Lord went up from us, notably and visibly served its end. The collective conscience of nations has in more than

one case yielded to the one continued protest against injustice and cruelty which is raised in the Gospel, and the latter of the two great Commandments has become in some measure at least a recognised standard of action.

And though even here some may be disposed to think the great work of leavening the lump as yet only begun, yet there can be no question that to the leaven we are to trace what good has been done, and that, in however slight a measure, and however slow a progress, the leavening is advancing age by age.

But, my brethren, when we look at our individual lives and enquire of them, surely the answer must be altogether different. Gentler maxims of conduct, larger heartedness, more words and deeds of love, these are not even so much as thought of in forming an estimate of progress or of character in our Church life. Nay, more, and worse, than this. Such effects of our religion are, if alleged respecting a man, openly and professedly despised, and repudiated as indicating any eminence or advance. We cast behind us our Lord's rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them." We proclaim that this is a deceptive rule, a lax and latitudinarian standard, and we take on us to amend it: "By their professions ye shall know them, by their opinions ye



shall know them, by their words ye shall know them." And so the great men in our Christian world are not the men of eminent Christian action, not the peacemakers, not the heroes of love and self-denial, but the vehement denouncers of differing opinion, the strong assertors of some narrow and well-marked line of doctrine in doubtful matters, the very persons who cause, instead of healing, division.

I know it is always easy to find excuse and justification for this. The cry of "*the truth in danger*" is ever ready on men's lips: the assertion that the present time, be it when it may, is a great crisis, to be dealt with exceptionally, has I suppose been made in every age of the Church. At all events, those who can look back over the last half century will remember that such things have never ceased to be alleged as temporarily standing in the way of the "end of the Commandment." Love, reconciliation, and reciprocal kindness, between differing Christian men and differing Christian bodies, are confessed to be admirable things, if they could but be had; but this is not the time for them: we live amidst imminent perils: talk not of disarming, when the foe is at the door. All my lifetime, good men have been saying this: many have spent their strength in the protest and are passed away, many are running the same course now, champions of division, their hand



against every man, and every man's hand against them : and to judge by the promise of the younger men who are coming up, such will be more than ever the spirit and practice of the age that is to follow us. Their converse, their speeches, their books and journals, are bristling with tokens of war ; doubtful things more strongly asserted, ill motives more rashly attributed, sweeping condemnations more recklessly pronounced. If the end of the Commandment is love, we of this Church, my brethren, have somehow missed the path, and are going altogether astray from it.

Our text not only points out to us the fact that the end of the Commandment is love ; it goes deeper than this, it shows us out of what that love ought to spring. Now if there be a defect of water down the stream, we may expect to find its fountains yielding but scantily. *There* it will be that the origin of the mischief must be sought, and there that the remedy must be applied. It may appear that the springs are shallow and want deepening ; or are uncared for, and have become choked up ; or both these faults may exist together. *The end of the Commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*

Doubtless these latter clauses may be regarded as putting a limitation on and conditioning the love

which is the end of the Commandment. Its stream is not to receive impure accessions, nor is it to lose its own distinctive character and quality. And this negative meaning of such expressions in Scripture, has ever been the more welcome one in the Church. It admits of being pushed so far as to nullify the real force and stress of the precept or declaration.

Thus, for instance, when St. James tells us that "*the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable,*"\* there are not wanting persons among us, who persuade themselves that the duty of being peaceable does not begin till the perfection of purity has been reached, and in this way they evade altogether the bearing of the declaration on their own conduct.

Thus too, when St. Paul concludes his Epistle to the Ephesians with the large-hearted Christian benediction, "*Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,*"† or "*in incorruption,*" these same persons will narrow down the import of this last word till it comes to include only their own religious body; nay, within that body only their own set of doctrinal opinions.

And thus, not in these alone, but in a hundred other instances, we are literally doing that with

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\* James iii. 17.

† Eph. vi. 24.

which our Lord charged the Scribes and Pharisees, *making void the word of God for the sake of, in order to maintain, our tradition.*

But, if these specifications in our text are in some sense limitations, that sense is but a secondary one. They have not only a negative, but also a strong positive and declaratory force, full of instruction to us of this day. Let us see what this is. The phrase, "*a pure heart,*" occurs in Holy Scripture sometimes in its most obvious sense of a heart cleansed from defilement, but perhaps oftener in that which it seems to bear here, the sense of a single undivided purpose. Thus we have in the Epistle of St. James, "*Purify your hearts, ye double-minded ;*"\* thus too we read of them *that serve the Lord out of a pure heart* ; thus again St. Paul says of himself that he *served God from his forefathers with a pure conscience ;*† thus again in Old Testament language we are told that "*the fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever.*"‡ And the pure heart in our text, out of which that charity which is the end of the Commandment is to spring, is plainly of this kind—singleness of purpose, without admixture of side-aims and selfish views.

And here is one chief root of the evil among our-

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\* James iv. 8.

† 2 Tim. i. 3.

‡ Ps. xix. 9.

selves, that the stream with us does not run pure. Our hearts are not set, our lives are not devoted, to the simple glorification of God by Christ, but to the furtherance of some certain system of opinions, or some defined set of agencies, which have gathered round, and for us embodied, the great central purpose of Christianity.

Let us not conceal from ourselves the truth, however unwelcome to a self-satisfied and boastful Church. Want of singleness of heart in devotion simply to God and God's work, is the cause of the wars and fightings which are so grievously prevailing within our own body, and of the unsympathising spirit which we show towards those who, differing in outward forms, are as much servants of Christ as ourselves. If the Commandment be one, and have one end, then I submit to you that it is impossible that this end can be attained, any more than other ends in life, except by those whose energies are centered towards its attainment.

But is this so with us? Is not our judgment of one another, is not our judgment of those without, evermore complicated by considerations over and above the simplicity which is in Christ? He may be never so devoted a servant of Christ, but if his opinions are not mine, if he take not the same view with myself of that Church of which we both are

members, I will not love him, I will not sympathise with him, I will judge hardly of his motives, I will look coolly upon and counteract his endeavours for good. This is the language, not which men speak and write—that they are afraid and ashamed to do—but on which they act, each towards his neighbour. And who does not see that this kind of feeling is even becoming systematised and embodied in public action in the organs of the various Church parties, whose vocation it is to thwart and to vilify one another?

Now this singleness of heart is even more conspicuously wanting in our conduct towards those who serve and love the Lord Jesus Christ, but not with our outward forms. For here we exhibit not only the accretion of secondary aims over the one single aim of the Christian heart, but also a demonstrable doubleness and inconsistency in our words and acts, which is wholly unworthy of earnest or of intelligent men.

In our graver estimate of these our brethren, we never for a moment deny them the title of Christians, we never presume to doubt their part in Christ, nor their co-operation with us in the work of God in the world. In our more serious moments, and when we speak and write before the public, these are our professed sentiments; but in private, and in social

life, many of us cast such thoughts entirely aside. Coldness of behaviour, and disparaging words, take the place of our former generous admissions. Nay, more than this; many are content to violate the first laws of liberty of conscience, and as far as their influence goes in matter of patronage and support, to make a neighbour suffer for the fact of his belonging to a different Christian body from themselves.

It is impossible that this self-contradiction can spring out of the pure heart insisted on in my text. A fountain cannot send forth out of the same place sweet waters and bitter. The fountain must have two sources, not one only, which can thus flow in two streams of a complexion and taste so diverse.

Nor, again, can such conduct be cleared of guilt of another kind in the sight of Almighty God. What is this loving Him and His work a little, and loving our own Church, or our own party in that Church, more, but a setting up in our heart of idols other than Him? What can a Church expect, which in the main thus approaches Him, but to be answered according to the multitude of its idols?

And has it not been so with us, and is it not so now? Can we say that He has blessed, can we say that He is blessing, our agencies for good at home and abroad? Ample reason for humble thankfulness

indeed we have, that He is pleased to use us in any degree for His work in the world ; but my question regards the relative condition of that work and its prospects ; and I answer it without fear of contradiction, that neither here in England, nor in our colonies, have we as a Church at this time any cause for self-congratulation : that a blight seems to be resting upon us, rather than a blessing.

And among the reasons for this, I cannot but reckon this our divided heart in God's service, this love of ourselves rather than of Him, this setting up of the idols of our position and our emoluments, and the accidents of our ecclesiastical and liturgical traditions, as a bar to our attaining the end of His Commandment, love out of a pure heart. We are verily guilty concerning our brethren : and of that guilt we are reaping the consequences, in coldness, and confusion, and distrust among ourselves, in paralysed action at the present, and dark misgivings for the future.

But there is always in those who are furthest from attaining Christian love, a ready answer to such pleadings as these. We must maintain purity of doctrine. Such a course as you are by inference recommending, tends to break down those bulwarks which the Church in her wisdom has set up, and to bring about an indifference to Christian truth. And



therefore we consider it the wiser and safer path, to keep to ourselves, to company only with those of our own views, or at widest with those of our own body, and thus to preserve the deposit of apostolical doctrine and order unimpaired.

No answer can be more specious than this ; at the same time, none can be more convenient, nor more calculated to save trouble. And in consequence it is cherished and acted on by a multitude of persons within our Church.

Of course, like every other self-deceit, it has a real and a true side. No one can deny that there exists for us the danger of indifference towards truth of doctrine, or that it is a mood widely prevalent in our day. But I entirely deny that such danger lies in the path of that love, which is enjoined in our text. For that text carefully guards itself, by its concluding words, against being perverted in this direction. "*The end of the Commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*" Thus it precludes, on the one side, that laxity of practice which might issue in carelessness concerning manner of life and testimony of conscience, and on the other that vagueness of belief which might lead to casting down the bulwarks of the faith.

But these words have also another voice for us.



The fact of the specification here of a good conscience, and the epithet attached to the word faith, suggest to us an unwelcome, but an unavoidable inference, that there is such a thing among those who hold the Commandment, as an evil conscience; that there is such a thing as a faith which is not unfeigned. We need not thereby mean that consciously-sustained hypocrisy is rife among us. The hypocrisy of self-deceit is, though not the more criminal, yet far the more hopeless form: and that, it is to be feared, is always widely prevalent. A man believes himself to be upright in matters of conscience, and sound in the faith, nay, prides himself in his zeal for correctness of life and of doctrine, but at heart is without any personal apprehension of the Lord whom he serves, lives not in the practice of a good conscience towards God, and simple personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. His rule is one not framed directly on the voice of Him that sitteth on the throne: Christ Himself is not present in his thoughts, nor communed with in his prayers. The human system again which has grown up around the facts of redemption, this is his object of reverence, not the Heavenly Father, not the Redeemer himself. And this kind of life necessarily hinders that charity which is the end of the Commandment. The single-hearted servant of an unseen

God looks for those who serve Him likewise : the simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ loves those who love Him. Differences may exist, in opinion, in practice ; but the good conscience, the faith unfeigned, does not dwell on these ; it looks above them ; it regards those who hold the common Master and Head as having common interest, and belonging to a common family. Whereas he who looks and fixes his thought less on the Lord Himself than on His accessories, is sure to find points of difference, causes of alienation and irritation, wherever he turns. And seeing that the good conscience, and faith unfeigned, are the real source of charity, the charity which flows from these is no breaker down of conscientious conviction, nor of doctrinal purity, no bringer in of indifferentism. That charity which necessitates compromise is of this world, not of Christ.

Probably no Christians since have ever differed more widely on important matters of Church practice, than did St. Paul and the Apostles who ruled the Church at Jerusalem. Read, with our modern ideas, the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, read that whole Epistle as compared with the Epistle of St. James, and you would wonder how the actors in the scene which that chapter describes, how the writers of those two Epistles, could ever work

together with a common creed and under a common master. But, notwithstanding, the rigid upholders of the law gave to the great innovator of Tarsus the right hand of fellowship : notwithstanding, they agreed that he should go to the Gentiles, while they ministered to the circumcision : and at the root of the heart, St. Paul and St. James loved and obeyed the same Lord ; *the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, to be held with no respect of persons* enforced by the one,\* is the same as the faith working by love, in Him *in whom there is no Jew and Gentile, no bond nor free, no male and female, but we are all one in Him*,† so gloriously set forth by the other.

Let these be our examples. Let us follow them, as they followed Christ. They could not help differing : no more can we. One of them had grown up into his unfeigned faith in Christ in the midst of his temple worship and his traditional beliefs ; the other had had the traditions of his fathers, all but their root in God, shattered to pieces when the glory of that light shone round him at Damascus. And in like, or in some other fashion, may God's Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will, bring in differences among ourselves ; differences of modes of thought and of cherished associations, differences in

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\* James ii. 1.

† Gal. iii. 28.

our ways of approach to the Father by the same blessed Redeemer. We need not surrender these differences : they are ingrained into the very texture of our conscientious life ; the faith has taken hold on our hearts by their means ; if we surrender them, in many cases, not the differing belief would be our lot, but the intermediate gulf of unbelief.

Nay, let us evermore cherish them, seeing that with them is bound up the consistency of our inner life, and the unfeignedness of our faith. We love this our Fathers' Church, thus constituted, thus administered : we can give our reasons for her ordinances : our hearts beat high as we read her struggles and triumphs in history : the halls of her worship are these venerable aisles, a very heaven to us of sight and sound : her praise is for us bound up with the varied Psalm and Canticle, and the massive chords of the organ : her liturgy has its appointed place, and its seemly vesture, and its becoming adornment. All this and more, belongs to the outward Church life, in the recurrence and under the influence of which our conscience can best be clear, in the process of which the faith unfeigned is for us enshrined.

And as we have no right to require of another that he should adopt these, so neither ought he to require of us that we should sacrifice them. If he

finds himself nearer to God for the absence of both the historical and the material fabric, let us not depreciate his faith : on the other hand let him not question ours.

But meantime let neither of us forget the end of the Commandment ; let neither of us, with or without intent, put a bar to its attainment by the substitution of other aims for that which it prescribes, by aggression under the guise of friendliness, or impracticable schemes of unity whose very terms are insult.

We live in a time in which conflict is rapidly superseding charity ; nay, in which men are ever readier to fight even than to work. Be it ours to remember, that not victory over one another, not victory in this world at all, is the end of the Commandment : that every blow struck at a member of Christ, is a loss to the Church, a loss to the stricken, a greater loss to the striker.

Let us bear in mind, that there may be many stirs among men, many striking displays, many choruses of human applause in the Church, as well as in the world ; but that in the keeping of the Commandment, as indeed in all things, but especially in the keeping of the Commandment, because it is the voice of the eternal One, it is he that looketh to the end who shall never do amiss.

VI.

THE REQUISITES OF AN EDUCATION FOR THE  
MINISTRY IN THE PRESENT DAY.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CENTENARY  
CELEBRATION, CHESHUNT COLLEGE, JUNE 25, 1868.



THE work of the ministry in Christ's Church is in this, as it has been in all times, divided into two principal portions, that of a shepherd and that of a teacher. Not that these two are so distinguished from each other as to be in practice separate occupations. The shepherd never ceases to be a teacher, nor the teacher to be a shepherd. If pastoral leading and feeding be not ever in the mind of the teacher, he teaches but ill; if that which he has received to teach be not constantly in the thoughts and lips of the shepherd, he feeds but insufficiently, and guides but feebly. The two act and re-act upon each other. But for the convenience of treatment we are obliged to separate them; and inasmuch as power to lead is more ministered to by power to teach than the converse, we will begin with the latter.



Power to teach is commonly measured by native aptitude working on acquired material. The former of these it is of course beyond our sphere to furnish. But in confessing this, we often take for granted too much. Perhaps the complex result, power to teach, is far less affected by pure natural genius than we are given to suppose. There is acquired aptitude as well; and not only is it true that in this race the tortoise may beat the hare, but it is also true that native aptitude to teach is very often latent, and not educed but by a training process. Therefore we frame our practice on the level, and let the exceptions emerge. We assume that all are equal, until we are obliged to recognise inequality.

It is plain that the chief material to be acquired for ministerial teaching is the knowledge of Holy Scripture. Not that it is the only material by any means. Knowledge of man is at least an indispensable requisite for putting the other knowledge into use. But so much of the knowledge of man as is matter of acquisition, can only be gained by dealing with men. I say, so much as is matter of acquisition, because very much which constitutes eminence in the knowledge of man is a matter of natural instinct. Some men who are both able and learned, remain all their lives without any knowledge of their fellow-creatures, while others, like the *Curé d'Ars*,

neither able nor learned, work wonders for years together by their marvellous insight into men.

But if we cannot create this insight, we can cultivate and endow it: and its best endowment is the knowledge of Scripture. Our first enquiry then is, how best in our days to impart the knowledge of Scripture. And here it will be plain to you that I am speaking, not of that practical and devotional knowledge which any who read and love Scripture may acquire, but of the knowledge required over and above that other to qualify a teacher: knowledge which may enable a man rightly to divide the Word of Truth, and intelligently to dispense its lessons to those who are to learn from him.

And the first requisite for this is, I conceive, that he should be thoroughly taught the circumstances under which, and the readers to whom, the books of Scripture were written. This involves more than may at first sight be supposed. A few paragraphs in an introduction, describing, for instance, the tower of Colossæ, and the habits of its people, and the object of the Apostle in writing to them, would form but a very small contribution to the knowledge of the Epistle. Very much more than this ought to be known. If it were only for our present purpose, the language which these people spoke, and in which the letter was written, must be learned. And it is

impossible to know a language without knowing some of its literature, and of the history of thought as conveyed by it. And so we come to a practical point, which is this: that something of a classical education is required for him who is to teach Holy Scripture. To my mind, looking at things from a Church aspect, it is this which makes the present outcry against classical education so much to be deplored. Of course, we would not deny that it may have been carried too far; but when we see proposals entertained for dropping out altogether from English education the language in which the New Testament is written, we cannot but fear the effect on the teaching power of our clergy, and as a consequence on the Christian intelligence of our country.

From the trained and qualified teacher I am persuaded that such an education ought never to be absent. The Epistles of St. Paul, to mention but one portion of his material, deal with great problems of Christian thought and feeling which will last as long as the world lasts. These are discussed after the manner of his time, according to his habits of thought, in the language of the thinkers of his day. Till you go over the work with his tools, you cannot fit that work to the varying wants of our time, and the differing capacities of our language. If you are to teach what St. Paul taught, you must,

in your measure, know what St. Paul knew, and feel what St. Paul felt. It seems to me preposterous that any man should be set to teach a congregation, who has never read, and never will read, one word of Holy Scripture as it was given to the world. It is impossible but that such a leader should be continually deceiving himself and them that hear him. And the knowledge of the original tongue should not be confined to the New Testament only. There can hardly be a doubt that the Biblical conflict of the coming age will be over the Old Testament. Very serious questions respecting it have in this land hardly yet been even entered upon by the Church, but are now beginning to present themselves to men's minds. At such a time the teachers of Christianity ought to stand in the first rank of learning and intelligence. If any modification in our understanding or our reading of those sacred books is required, they are the persons who ought to lead the way in suggesting such modification, and to be foremost in adopting it.

Next to the acquisition of the language of Scripture, and putting that acquisition to profit by study of the sacred books, care should be taken to ascertain of what those sacred books consist. As we at present possess them, they have come to us in a traditional rather than in a critically adjusted form. In the

case of the New Testament, a kind of revision of the sacred text was made about the time of the Reformation, by the aid of such ancient authorities as were then accessible. From that time to this, the testimony of those authorities has been continually augmented by discovery, and certified by research. And the result is, that the text which would be now universally agreed on by those qualified to judge in the matter, differs in many particulars, some of them of grave import, from that known as the received text.

It is plain that if we are to deal faithfully by Scripture, he who is set to teach from it must have an adequate knowledge of what has taken place in this matter, that he may be able to put before his people as nearly as possible what the sacred writers really have delivered to us. I believe it will not be long before a revision of our authorised version must take place. But till this time, and indeed none the less after this time, the Christian teacher ought to be able in all cases to himself, and in the more important cases to those he instructs, to render a reason for the text which he adopts.

Passing by, as taken for granted, instruction in those collateral matters without which a man cannot even understand Scripture for himself, I come to a very important requisite, more than ever needed in

our time; I mean training in the use of Scripture for doctrine and for edification. We all know that the plainest public document is of little comparative use to an unskilled person. Some portions of it, indeed, may be so simple as to speak the same language to all; but for certainty of inference from it, training in the interpretation of such documents is required. An Act of Parliament may seem to the unskilled to enjoin or prohibit this or that; but the penetration of a legal mind is required to decide upon its real meaning. Now it may be safely said that the difference between the trained and the untrained is even greater in the case of Scripture than in the example quoted. While happily the sacred volume has its unmistakeable message for the cottager and for the child, and while the mind of the Holy Spirit is more surely attained by becoming as a little child than by any amount of mere human learning, the Bible of all books requires the greatest amount of careful study from him who is to explain and supply it. There is no more formidable enemy to truth than the rash untaught expounder of Scripture. Up and down in society we find such men, frequently with amazing knowledge of their pocket Bible as to its contents, but without the faintest streak of exegetical tact or power of intelligent comparison—men of whose expositions any celebrated “cross reading

of Scripture texts” is hardly a caricature. Of course such an amount of ignorance can hardly be found in the trained student; but even he is frequently not exempt from several of their faults in his exposition of Scripture. I will mention one in particular: the fault of inquiring less what Scripture has said, than what it ought to say, and may be made to say. The great majority of our English expository works are tainted throughout with this fault. St. Paul’s Greek sentence looks as if it meant,—would mean, if used by a secular writer, so and so; but St. Paul could never mean that, because we assume that St. Paul signed the Thirty-nine Articles, and that meaning is, or seems, inconsistent with them. And, therefore, St. Paul must be interpreted by the Articles, not the Articles by St. Paul. Depend on it, a great requisite for our ministerial teaching in England is the “Unbefangenheit” in Scripture exegesis, on which our German neighbours insist, and of which they have given such eminent examples. To pass from English commentators to such works as those of De Wette and Meyer, is to emerge into freer air, and unfettered action. I feel for myself that I cannot adopt, that I have an increasing aversion to, the rationalistic systems of both these writers; but for all that, I find them by far the most valuable expositors. And that, just because of the almost total absence from their



pages of any wish to bend plain language so as to suit preconceived notions; because they simply inquire throughout not “What *may* it mean?” but “What *does* it mean?” The question so constantly and so timidly thrust on us as a bar to this unfettered inquiry, “Whither will it lead us?” is not one for us to entertain. If the Scripture is to be our rule of faith, it is plain that we must obey the Scripture, not the Scripture us; we must go to the Scripture to be taught, not to teach. And the higher our estimate of Scripture, the more willing shall we be, if that estimate be a real one, not one adopted conventionally, to follow its teaching, whether it confirm our system or impugn it. How much a change on these points is needed, may be estimated from the fact that the men among us whose language is most high-pitched respecting the authority of Scripture, are the very last to give pains to examine, in any given case, what that authority enjoins, and the most reluctant to submit to it when ascertained.

But in order to explain Scripture profitably, much more than unfettered action is required. In a great proportion of cases, the erroneous expositor goes astray for want of common sense. All kinds of outrageous things are said and printed as being according to Scripture, because men will not use the eyes and ears which God has given them. What



is called faithful preaching may go on for years in a church, and yet absolutely no effect may be produced by it, because it is addressed not to English men and English women of the nineteenth century, but to some ideal beings, existing only in the imagination of the preacher. The calamitous failure of those who have thus taught, to lead either opinion or practice in our day, may be traced in great measure to this defect in studying the character and wants of the time. They have gone on wearying us with remedies for diseases which we had not, and loading us with abuse for those which we had : unless indeed these latter escaped them altogether. And the result has been that the age, like any other mistreated patient, has shown itself weakest where they encouraged us to think it strongest ; and in matters where they believed it to have no vigour at all, has fairly broken away from and distanced them.

And these considerations bring me to the second portion of that which I had to say—the requisites at the present time for education to lead and shepherd the flock. I am afraid that in this department our present training is very defective, and that inability to guide is very general on the part of our ministry. I am sure that this is so in the Established Church of England. The newly-ordained candidate knows no more of the material on which he has to

work, than he may have picked up in youth by his own natural observation. Our proceeding in this matter is about as rational as it would be to take a house-surgeon for an hospital by lot among the bystanders. And the result is, that among us the pastoral office, as such, is almost in abeyance. The last thing that a thinking man will do in spiritual perplexity is to consult his clergyman; because he knows that his clergyman has never been trained to minister to a mind diseased, because he feels that he shall probably be snubbed for his doubts, and told that difficulties which are to him very real are no difficulties at all. We want among us, not the confessional, but some substitute, according to our views, for the admirable training which the Roman Catholic priest receives for his duties in the confessional: some preparation to become the *ductor dubitantium* and the *consolator mœrentium* among the actual men of our own time. At present I feel that the attitude of our clergy towards the age, and the men of the age, is far too generally a bar against their usefulness in this matter. There is an almost universal railing at the age, and at its habits of thought and practice. Any manifest want of the day is set down as something which ought to be opposed or ignored, and the mental symptoms of our time are deliberately put aside as not worth attention. General sentences

of condemnation are pronounced against whole schools of thought and opinion, without any pains bestowed to understand them, without any inquiry how far they may represent the influence of Christianity itself, working in unsuspected or hitherto unexampled forms. We need an ever watchful, ever varied training of our candidates for the ministry in the knowledge of the men, and of the thoughts of the men, among whom they are to be cast. That the clergy should ever again assume that kind of lead which they once had, is as impossible as it would be undesirable; but that they ought to be made acquainted with, and to feel with and for, the mental and spiritual state of their flocks, surely none will deny. Men do not now think, men ought not now to think, as any priest prescribes; but it cannot but be salutary, that men should know and feel that their spiritual pastors are at least their equals in the race of thought, and even their superiors in observation of its tendencies. Whatever this age may be, it is at any rate more worthy of *our* attention and study than all that have gone before; for it is our appointed test of responsibility, our prescribed field of labour. If we turn our attention, as we needs must do, to other ages, it is mainly that we may be able to understand this. Historically, they have contributed to its production; analogically, they may suggest a

solution for its problems. Compared with them, it is probably better, inasmuch as good is ever spreading and deepening; and it is probably worse, as the increase of good ever brings out the antagonism of evil. And not only is it worthy of more study, but it also requires more. For the tangled web of human thought and motive is ever becoming more tangled; as the scale of the great map enlarges, more minute details are brought into view; the very edge of wisdom, the very bloom of charity, depend upon humble search for neglected phenomena, upon tracking home superficial appearances. Of course there is, as ever, liability to mistake. At the best, they who are passing through the plain cannot see far round them. And the hedges which fence their path may further bound their vision, or their eye may be fixed in one direction only, and may never have fairly swept the horizon. But, at all events, those who have made the attempt are better leaders than those who have not. Much of its success depends on the spirit in which it is made. It is too often forgotten that, of all ages in history, our own deserves at our hands most reverence. Man has written the history of the past, but God is writing the history of the present. In the past we heard of Him by the hearing of the ear, but in the present our eye seeth Him: and the result should be recog-

niton of His presence, reverence for His work amongst us, the hushing down of our own prejudices and likings, and casting ourselves heartily into that line of action which His Providence points out to us. Such a frame of mind, leading to such a course of action, would tend to remove from among our clergy the unreasoning opponent of Christian progress, the blustering denouncer of innovations, the rigid adherent to prescribed human rule.

Perhaps there never was a time in the history of the Church when there lay before her clergy higher duties, combined with greater opportunities. Higher duties—for it seems certain that the great reconstruction of the Reformed Church of England is coming rapidly upon us,—a reconstruction on purer grounds of faith, and larger axioms of charity, than any which the world has hitherto seen :—and greater opportunities—for the old weapons of persecution are broken up ; speech has perfect liberty, persuasion unbounded access. To those who read the course of the venerable Foundress of this your College, how great is the contrast between that day and this ! Then everything tended to obstruct, now everything invites onwards. Obstacles are falling, facilities are arising, so unexpectedly, so rapidly, that our thankfulness can hardly keep pace with our wonder.

At such a time, my friends, I am sure you will

remember that an Institution like your own occupies a peculiar place, and has laid on it especial duties. You touch the Episcopal ministry on the one side, and that of the great Congregational bodies on the other. You form, as it were, a little colony of that territory of Christian recognition which we hope to see co-extensive with this great empire. On you, as on the hill-tops of the new land, ought to fall the first beams of the better sunlight, in which will live and move the future churches of England; from you ought those beams to glitter forth, and to gladden the distant but thronging pilgrims of truth. You will not fail to remember that the first requisite of the work which is laid upon you is earnestness and thorough Christian simplicity. This time, of all times, repudiates double purpose and tortuous tactics in the work of God. Where these exist, it is but to counteract themselves by provoking tenfold reaction. Never more than now has His hand been visible, who taketh the wise in their own craftiness. Not by scheming men, not by men athirst for power, will the new reformation be brought in, but by men in whose hearts dwells Christ by faith; by simple earnest men, whom no difficulties in detail will keep back from duty, and no prospect of easy victory will induce to adopt falsehood. If it be too hard a saying, that one requisite of clerical education in the past

has sometimes been to teach men to tell lies, it is at all events a safe one, that the chief requisite at present is to teach them to cleave to truth.

And I doubt not you will also remember that the cause of truth is not now served by violent, or what we have learned to call "sensational" courses. On the progress of public opinion depends, under God, the future of our land. And public opinion, like every other healthy natural growth, cannot be forced on. It will grow at its own pace, and will take its own way. The great food of its growth is that quality in us of which the Apostle said, Let your moderation, your reasonableness, your *ἐπιείκεια*, be known unto all men. When the Christian public find us what they may fairly expect us to be, when they are persuaded of our singleness of principle and moderation of conduct, then it is that they listen and are led. We in England do not love uncertain men, nor startling acts. When public opinion is outraged, it shrinks back; and he who thought to achieve years in a moment, finds himself thrown back past where he begun. Therefore must those who would lead public opinion be moderate and reasonable men; men moreover, alive to the signs of the time; looking out for and buying up those opportunities which are only found by seeking.

One more point, and but one more, I would urge



upon you. This is not an age of rhetoric. Great effects are not now produced by great words. We have been a literary people long enough to have used up most of our big phrases. If any rhetoric wants teaching to those who are to lead others, it is the rhetoric of simplicity: the art of expressing earnest thoughts in plain words. Not the outer sparkle, but the inner heat, kindles the sympathy of modern hearers. It is true, the day of flocking after great orators is not gone by; but the day of seeing through them is come. Any man of superior ability can call up words and images; eloquence may be the heart breaking bounds, but it may also be admirable acting; and the shrewder the age becomes, the more will it be distrusted. Therefore, let our clergy begin by distrusting it: let them cultivate blamelessness of speech, but not display: let them aim at kindling, not the crackling thorns of fine language, but the steady flame of the love of Christ and of the souls of men.

And this brings us to our close. Whatever else may be doubtful, this at least is certain. We of the ministry shall need, for whatever may be coming upon us, vastly more of that spirit of charity which is the end of the commandment. I sadly fear that for the most part the younger men among us are rather conspicuous for its defect; narrower in their



views, more made up in their opinions, with less of kindly allowance in their thoughts, and less fear of offending in their words. I am sure I am speaking in a place where, if anywhere, such faults will be guarded against. Your history may abundantly teach you the danger of alienated hearts and chilled affections. There is no saying how much the great movement of the last century might have gained, could but Whitefield and Wesley have aided, or even tolerated, one another. Over the cradle of your Institution bitter words were spoken, hard blows were struck, which have left their echoes and their scars upon the churches of our day. In the coming strife (for strife is coming) these are sure by many to be renewed. From such renewals let us at least be free: free in our practice as ministers, and in our training for that practice. For we are of those who have nothing to defend but truth, and nothing to practise but love. Side aims require carnal weapons; but the pure single heart can afford to be true; the good conscience needs no self-justifying; the faith unfeigned can leave results with God.

VII.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

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HISTORY, to those who read it aright, is the God of truth working out truth. As the ages pass on, one great principle after another, by the help of men, or independently of men, or even in spite of men, finds its way to the front, struggles for a time, is borne down and repressed, but breaks out again, and ultimately gains the day. Not unfrequently the victory is achieved at some totally unlooked-for moment. Those who have stopped their ears to the trumpet are won by the whisper: the barriers that men have been centuries in strengthening fall without a defender.

And at each such conquest, mankind passes into a higher phase of thought and action. New fields open before the eye, objects of ambition are avowed which had been hitherto unknown: the visions of yesterday

become the solid hopes of to-day, and the distance teems with airy shapes, which shall take form in their turn to-morrow.

In the course of this advance, one thing is especially notable. Truth is greater than men. Often it becomes expedient to men to recognise some partial form of a great world-wide principle. "Hitherto," they say, "but no further. Thus much will we have and enact, but what follows upon this, we will not enact, and we will not have." You will not, but there is one greater, and He will. The inexorable logic of consequences rules even Acts of Parliament, which rule all things else.

And Truth is greater than systems. Every age has had its ideal, to which its best men have clung; but not one of those ideals has ever become permanent fact. The facts which abide, and form the groundwork for action, have come from elsewhere than the human brain. They were the strong yearnings of a contemptible class, uttered by vilified names, till the air became full of the sound: they were the exceptions and irregularities, dangerous and suspected, but prevailing till they became the rule.

Sometimes we see this process going on; sometimes it goes on without our seeing it. There are ages, as there are persons, without self-consciousness: when the life is just lived for the life, and no account is

taken. And there are ages, which are all self-consciousness ; and of those is our own ; every movement registered, every symptom watched, nothing done in secret : pamphlets, and books, and speeches, prompting onward or repressing : whether to conquer in, or perish in,—light enough.

And what does this light show concerning a matter dear to the hearts of all the best among us ? On that multitude of men of whom Christ is the master, and Christ's Spirit the guide, what rays does it throw, tending to reveal their progress and destiny ?

The answer may, we conceive, be given thus. Three centuries ago, the Church in this land awoke from a dream of ages. In her re-constitution, certain great principles were asserted. For example, that which is now embodied in her Sixth Article—that nothing is to be required of any man to be believed as necessary to salvation which is not contained in, or may be proved by, Holy Scripture. It will be plain to any reasoning mind, that such an admission is destructive of a prescribed national faith, just in proportion as the intelligence of the nation increases ; unless indeed that increase of intelligence should bring about a general consensus in the interpretation of Scripture as to matters required to be believed. The assertion of liberty of conscience here made was absolutely inconsistent with the coercion of belief,—

and of worship, the utterance of belief,—assumed in the state constitution of the National Church. The reader need not be reminded that this was ere long perceived, and that measures were taken in remedy. The political evil was met by Toleration. Freedom of profession and of worship was, after much sad suffering, and many a conflict, secured by enactment. Thus at least was removed the anomaly of prosecution, by law of the State, for acting on the principle of the Church of the State; and men appeared contented. The dominant party seemed to themselves to have gone quite as far as was consistent with caution and safety; and the party relieved were too glad to have obtained so much recognition. And there for a while the matter rested. One blow had been given to the wedge. The well-compacted fabric of national conformity, though it might show a crack, was yet safe and unshaken.

And let the reader note what was done; for it set the pattern of what should be done hereafter, and of what has been done since. The remedy was applied, *not to the Church but to the State*. The theory of the Church was left unaltered, and was supposed to be unalterable. And of course the effect at once was, to create a dissidence between that theory and matter of fact. As long as the theory was carried into practice by the crushing out of Nonconformity, the Church

was a reality, whether for good or not ; but the possibility of such crushing out being removed by law, the Church became at once, so far as that was concerned, an unreality. And notice the effect of this. It was mischievous in two ways. It enabled the advocates of intolerance to entrench themselves behind the ineffective though unabrogated canons, and to maintain in theory an exclusive National Church ; and it enabled Churchmen in general to take credit to themselves for a generous policy towards others, which they had never pursued. And besides both these, there was the immense bar to the Church's usefulness resulting, in her utter incapacity to deal with, or even to recognise, actually existing circumstances. The whole public consciousness of Churchmen became a fiction. The statistics, on which their action on the people was built, were simply false. Population outstripped their efforts, it is true ; but while their churchmanship predicated spiritual destitution of all outside their pale, their common sense compelled them to confess that a considerable portion of these were in reality spiritually provided for. This image of iron and clay had no coherence ; it would yield to the first vigorous blow.

Meantime toleration, which at first seemed payment in full, began to be spoken of as a mere instalment of what was due. Nothing so common a



complaint with the votaries of exclusiveness, as that every concession leads to fresh demands: and nothing so true. Till the great principle conceded be in every detail practically recognised, there can be no resting-place. The tolerated religionists began to ask themselves, and to ask the State, what right they had, who proclaimed all Englishmen equal in the eye of the law, and declared that none was to be required to believe except upon proof, to set up a standard of conformity, and to proclaim political disability as the consequence of departure from it?

We need not waste time and paper in relating the conflict whereby an answer to this question was wrung from a reluctant legislature. We note the fact that such disabilities were abolished, because that abolition, at first accomplished with a reserve in favour of Christianity, in a very few years became absolute in favour of non-Christians as well.

Let us remark, that every one of these steps has been a driving further and further of the wedge, and that at each one a new and more advanced form of a great truth has been recognised. It was not possible, in the free development of the national conscience, to rest at any one of these points of progress. The next in the series was inevitable, as each was gained. For instance, the lingering anomaly of taxing Nonconformists for church expenses was vir-

tually doomed, when civil disabilities were removed from them. It has taken thirty-five years to obliterate it: and at any time during that interval, it was plain that the abrogation of the compulsory rate must come. Of late, the only difficulty has been the confessedly formidable one, how it might best be effected.

And as with the past, so with the future. We have not yet reached the end of the series. There are still terms to come, which the process of time will work out: terms involved in our previous concessions. It may take years to bring them out; but supposing always that our nation is left free to develope its onward course, they will one day be brought out; as certainly as those before them have been.

And what are they? What, at all events, is that one of them which "looms larger" before us, and asserts its right next to become a reality?

Let the present writer remind his readers that he is not here advocating a theory, but simply dealing with what appears to him to be matter of fact, and expectation founded on that matter of fact.

We are clearly now at this point. The State is an organized whole, whose units are simply denizens of the realm, without reference to creed. To this, it is true, there are some exceptions; but these excep-

tions are rather reservations for safety's sake, than infringements of the principle. They spring from the State's instinct of self-preservation, not from her disfavours any particular creed.

This on the one hand. On the other, the State still professes, and still maintains, a particular form of faith and worship. That these two facts should subsist, the one over against the other, would be incredible, were we constructing a fictitious republic. That they do so subsist, is a proof of the tenacity of historical tradition as against the reason of things.

And now let us mark the consequence as it has affected the Church. The Church, in any worthy sense of the word, is a living body, animated by a living spirit. Into whatever organized form it may have gathered, it has its growth and vital action. Its subjective growth is the advance of its consciousness of God and of good; its objective action is the imparting of this growing consciousness, and its combat with evil. Its economic arrangements are the provisions of means whereby both these may be best carried on.

The effect of the present anomaly has of necessity been to crystallize both the growth and action of the Church. It was, of course, impossible that either could be shared by the State in its present form: and yet State sanction was imperative, while State

sympathy was impossible. The result could be but one. Church growth and action were minimized. Conservation is less trouble than renovation: and thus the Church of three hundred years ago, with all her dead enactments, and her incongruities with present reality, is of necessity the Church of the present time. It is as if a regiment were to be sent out into nineteenth-century warfare, clad in the cumbersome armour of the ages of chivalry.

But may not this possibly shew that the State ought to take *more* trouble in this matter, and thoroughly to reform the constitution of the Church? Let him who puts this question look well at the agency by which any such reform will have to be accomplished. Let him ask himself, how much is likely to be left of what Churchmen most value, when the reform shall have been by such agency accomplished? Besides, where in such a case would be liberty of conscience? Every step would be reactionary. We should be working back upon the series, blotting its terms already brought out, instead of bringing out more. The Church of England is not only a State-constituted Church; it is a body of Christian men, fully persuaded in their own minds: why are their persuasions to be overridden by a body outside their own? The reformation of the Church by the State is a mere chimera. It might be thrown

out for half a generation to play with, and might thus stop the way of the inevitable for a time ; but to the old complexion things would come again ; the next term in the free national development would yet have to be found.

## II.

And that next term is, the severance of the Church from the State. Whether years, or decades of years be taken for the accomplishment of this :—however it may be deprecated, and however opposed ;—accomplished it will certainly be. History has for ages been preparing its way ; in past changes, it has been conceded over and over again ; God's arm is thrusting it on, and man's power cannot keep it back. We suppose we are speaking vastly within bounds when we say, that there is hardly a reflecting man among us who looks forward to the existence of a State Establishment in this land a century hence. This being so, it may be well to deal with a few preliminary considerations before we enter on the main subject of our present paper.

First, it is unfair to characterize those who forewarn others of the approach of this change, and endeavour to prepare them for it, as the enemies of the Church. Nothing can be easier than the employment of this kind of weapon. Every petty

provincial or party journal can wield it; and by wielding it, escape the necessity of understanding the matter at issue. Even were the whole question to be considered in the abstract, the most ardent friends of the Church might believe that she is rather hampered than aided by State Establishment: might feel with regard to their own Church that which most of us feel respecting another, that the temporal power is a hindrance and not a help. But we are not called on to come to any abstract determination. Were State Establishment all the blessing which its advocates maintain that it is, our position would be the same in this matter: for State Establishment is foredoomed. There is no need, in that which we have to say, that we should express, or even imply, our views on the abstract question. We deal with the course of facts: we draw inferences from the unfolding of history.

And this may be the best place to say also a word on the extreme injustice of denouncing all those who are actually fighting against the *principle* of State Establishment, as leagued for the destruction of the Church of England. Never was a denunciation less borne out by truth. The most zealous Nonconformist, if he be also a zealous Christian, may ardently wish for the Church of England power to do her work on the population entrusted to her, and may believe

that the issue of the present system is to withhold that power. And not only *may* this be so, but, having the privilege of knowing several of the leaders of the "Liberation" movement, I am able to say that it is so. No member of our Church would more firmly withstand any effort to cripple or enfeeble her real usefulness than would these her reputed enemies; and yet (or rather, from their point of view, *and therefore*) they believe themselves bound to use every effort to procure her severance from the State.

The present writer would therefore earnestly beg of his readers to eliminate from their minds the whole of the gratuitous abuse which is, by those who ought to know better, heaped on the heads of persons who presume to advocate, or even to foretell, the disestablishment of the English Church.

An objection, formidable at first sight, but in itself absolutely chimerical, is frequently urged in these, or in like words:—That the State, in separating off the Church, abandons her profession of religion, and thereby ceases to be Christian. And this is, of course, by the mob of writers whose only power consists in strength of words, intensified so as to look frightful, and to carry terror to their readers. The State is represented as thus "casting off Christ," as "apostatizing from God," &c., &c.

It is little creditable to our intelligence, that such



a fallacy should find acceptance anywhere. That it should be put forth in high places, and uttered with senatorial gravity, is truly astonishing. For let us consider what it is for a State to profess a religion. It is no less than this, that that particular faith and worship shall be part of the law of the nation, and shall bind all its constituents. Thus much only of toleration is admissible,—that active repression of differing faiths may not be binding: their professors may be allowed to co-exist on the soil; but that is all. Any, even the slightest participation of such Nonconformists, as such, in official national life, invalidates the State profession and renders it a fiction. Spain, and the Papal States, occur to us as examples of consistent professions of this kind. Our own realm was not one, even in the days of the Test Act, because she enforced different modes of faith north and south of the Tweed.

It must surely be plain to every thinking man, that all reality of such profession has long ago been surrendered here in Britain. At the first recognition of Presbyterianism, the State ceased to be Episcopalian: at the first admission of Jews to office, she ceased, in this formal sense, to be Christian. That the fiction of State-Anglicanism continues to be kept up, is nothing to the point. The State is what she is, not what she calls herself. What there can be of



departure from faith, or of apostasy, in her professing to be that which she really is, it passes us to comprehend. Rather does it appear to us the bounden duty of every responsible body of men, as it is of every individual man, to remove from itself all inconsistency of profession with practice: not to suffer obsolete theories to keep their hold on outward forms, to the hindrance of sound national progress, and the obscuration of the very grounds of political duty.

And let not this ancillary fallacy survive the principal one;—that we thus “cease to be a Christian nation.” Whatever be the Christianity of the nation, it is measured, not by any legal enactment or fiction, but by the presence and working of the Christian conscience in the aggregate of its constituents. Christianity is not matter for human law, but for the free spirit of man. This first principle is plainly asserted by at least our branch of the Church, as we have seen above. And the Christianity of our nation is then proved, when her constituent elements act together on the verdict of the Christian conscience: when she performs, by her legislature, acts of plain duty but questionable expediency, such as the liberation of the slaves in her West Indian possessions; when she succours the oppressed without gain for herself, as in the recent expedition to Abyssinia. One such act stamps her Christian before God

and man, more than all the fictitious survivals of her play-professions of Anglicanism.

Another formidable array of objections is brought forward by those persons, who find their account in parrying the logic of principle by allegations of difficulty in detail. Every great change for the better has been loudly deprecated by these prophets of evil. "It can never be done: it will never work: the difficulties are too terrible to be contemplated." Sometimes this Cassandra-prophecy springs from pure timidity: more frequently, from inability to comprehend the true bearing of great principles, and the analogy of history. Oftener still perhaps, from mixed motives, which we are not called upon to characterise. It forms the knock-down unanswerable argument of second-class, otherwise called practical, men. It suits a strong voice and bullying manner, and is compatible with a considerable infusion of sarcasm, and epigrammatic effect. The unhappy upholder of high principle who is not prepared with his balance-sheet, stands no chance in society with one such practical man. He has but a single sentence to utter: his cause is pleaded in three words and he can but repeat them. Whereas his opponent can summon arguments from all points of the compass;—

*"Unà Eurusque Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis  
Africus, et vastos volvunt ad litora fluctus."*

It would be a poor compliment to the sagacity of our readers to remind them, that no difficulty in detail can set aside an obligation of duty. We would rather remind them of the true use of these prophets of evil, as correctives to untimely zeal. There can be no doubt that the carrying out of disestablishment will be accompanied by enormous difficulties; difficulties of which only mature consideration, and ample discussion, can possibly bring about the solution. After the principle is conceded by our Legislature, long years may be spent in arranging satisfactorily the conditions of the parting covenant. It is a matter in which nothing should be done hastily or unadvisedly.

And as nothing should be thus done, so nothing will be. It is very easy, it is the more telling mode of thought and speech, to distrust, to discredit, to instil alarm and apprehension: but we confess to having arrived at the more difficult and less popular mode, that of trusting, and resting tranquil. The course of English history has shewn, that every step in our advancing series has been more for good, and less for evil, than any of us anticipated; that when we seemed beset with difficulties, and our way hopelessly intricate, the national conscience struck a clear course, and our apprehended loss became our undeniable gain. Therefore I believe we may set our

minds perfectly at ease, with regard to any fear of injustice towards the Anglican Church. The nation is not capable of committing it. The legislature, on whatever basis elected, cannot perpetrate it. The sense of justice in the English community is so strong, that we may lay it down as an element safely to be assumed in any coming change, that what we deserve at the hands of the State, we shall have. Not only, I am persuaded, will ample means be left of carrying on our Church work, but all due provisions for self-government, and all necessary appeals to law, will be secured for us. We shall, in the language of international commerce, be not less favoured than the most favoured community.

Believing this, I am content to leave the whole question of property, and legal status, to the conscience and the wisdom of the legislature. If, as the advocates of Establishment are fond of maintaining, our amalgamation with the State is to us Churchmen the chief safeguard of liberty of conscience, and guarantee for our personal rights,—surely, in her greatest transaction with the Church, the State is not likely to forget this guardianship, or to pretermitt this warranty.

These last words bring before us another objection to disestablishment, frequently urged by a certain party in the Church. At present, the full latitude of

doctrine allowed by our formularies is ensured to us by the action of the State. And the very fact of the dead-lock to which our false position in connection with the State has brought us, acts as a safeguard against those formularies being narrowed. But, it is said, once sever the Church from the State, and this consequence will follow. The priestly party, ever the most vigorous in action, and the least scrupulous as to means, will overbear all opposition : will narrow the basis of churchmanship, and drive all but their own out of the Church.

That they will do this if they can, no one can doubt, who has watched their proceedings during the last few years. But that they will ever be able to do it, I cannot for a moment believe. In spite of their pertinacious self-assertion, their numbers are but few. Their strength is mainly derived from the vigorous determination of a flock of young curates and incumbents, poured in upon us from extra-university sources : seminarists, rather than English clergymen. The fact of this influx is mainly due to the anomalies, and unfairnesses, incident to the present state of the Church-ministry as a profession. These have tended to dry up the normal sources of supply for the ranks of our clergy. Remove them, and those sources will again yield. And we surely cannot believe that the educated middle class of

England will ever send up to the Bishops men capable of holding or maintaining the disingenuous quibbles on which the aggressive action of the priestly party is founded.

But more, and safer, than this. The great bulk of English Churchmen are anti-sacerdotal. That large majority, including by far the greater part of the Evangelical clergy, now rest quiet, secure in the protection of the State. Let that protection be removed, and there will start into action a power which the Sacerdotalist never dreamt of in his philosophy. The average sober Churchman, the Evangelical almost wherever found, now looks on Convocation as a mere farce. As to its use in the ventilation of opinion, and the influence of expressed public sentiment at home and abroad, they both are sadly mistaken: but as to any enacted results, they are right. Convocation, as at present carried on, is a feeble show of opposition by some moderate and some "extreme" men, to the noisy dictation of a knot of Sacerdotalists. Every resolution to which it comes, will be, and must be, a step in their direction. I have before in this journal expressed deep regret that this is allowed to be so, by the non-attendance of those who might change it for the better: but so it is, and so it will be ever, I fear, under the present constitution of the Church.

But once let Convocation become a reality, and no one surely can doubt that the case will be forthwith reversed. In order to become a reality, Convocation must be reformed. And that, not in the sense in which resolutions have already been carried for its reform. A more efficient representation of the clergy would doubtless under the present relations of the Church to the State be an immense improvement. But, while these relations subsist, this must be all. A layman, as such, can no more be admitted into Convocation while it is part of the Constitution, than a foreigner could be admitted to sit in the House of Commons. Convocation, in any constitutional sense, is the representation of the clergy, and of the clergy alone. But sever the Church from the State, and the immediate result will be the thorough reform of Convocation, which will then no longer be bound to represent the clergy alone, but will at once become the representative body of the whole Church, clergy and laity. We are quite aware of all the dust which has been raised on this matter of the admission of the laity into the provincial Council. But we have not a moment's fear on the point. Let the Church awake to her instinct of self-preservation, and it surely requires no prophet to foretell that her very first step will be the full representation of her laity by laymen in her governing Council.



But then the foreboders of evil say, In such a Council you will have only bickering and wrath, the seeds of dissension and schism. I have no such fear. Ludicrous as the whole subject of Convocation seems to the majority of mankind, I conceive that we already owe to its re-assembling a grave obligation: that it has been designed by God's good Providence to prepare us, by its prolusory and mostly nugatory debates, for the time when we shall be engaged in council to decide immense realities. And how has it tended so to prepare us? Partly by acquainting us with the necessities of debate, and the ordinary forms of business: but mainly, by effectually dissipating the above-stated apprehension. It has been abundantly shewn, by several years' experience, and a great variety of examples, that Christian gentlemen of the most antagonistic opinions can meet, and can discuss the very subjects on which they most widely differ, not only without ill-blood, but with the immense gain of understanding and appreciating one another. Warmth of feeling has not been repressed: hot words have been uttered again and again; but I boldly challenge any one who has been present to say, whether the uniform relation to one another of opponents in that chamber has not been that of personal esteem and kindness. It may be said, that this is partly because a distinguished member of our



House, who is ever the rashest and hottest in speech, is also the most ready and generous in apology : and that by his example, satisfaction, among us, is larger than injury. No doubt this is so ; but I cannot question the certainty of a similar friendly relation between all the members of any elective Church-assembly. We have no right to suppose that, when the Church is more fairly and fully represented, her representatives will be less mindful of their Christian duties to one another, than we find them at present.

### III.

Having now stated, and I hope met, some of the principal preliminary objections to the consideration of coming disestablishment, I will proceed to inquire what in such an event will probably be, in some important particulars, the condition of the Church.

As to legal competency for self-government and correction of abuse, I have already expressed my conviction that no needful arrangements or securities will be wanting.

Next, will there be a loss even of outward prestige and precedence? I think not, or at least not for many generations. The “parish church,” the “rector,” the “vicar,” the “parson of the parish,” are household words in England : and we do not easily drop our household words. As regards the

outward semblance of things, I should imagine that it would remain, in the average country or town parish, much the same as now. It would not be in appearances, but in realities, that the change would make itself felt.

Among those realities, the first to occur to us is, the status and income of the clergy. It is the habit of random writers and speakers to treat the severance of the Church from the State as if it must necessarily be a spoliation of the Church. I have already said that I have no fear in this direction. But be the conditions of the separation what they may, I cannot for a moment believe that ultimately the Anglican clergy will be impoverished by it. Of course it must bring about modifications and adjustments. I should imagine that centralization of some kind will be inevitable: Diocesan, or Provincial, or both. The incomes of the clergy will be made up partly by local payments, and partly from a sustentation fund; the most probable administration of which will be Diocesan. Startling inequalities must of course be pared down, immensely to the advantage of the Church. She will not then maintain two neighbouring rural clergymen, whose right to social position, and whose work, are equal, the one as a prince, the other as a beggar. Whatever may have become of their original revenues, their new income will be

adjusted according to the work involved in each case, and the capacity of the workman to do it. Nor have I the least fear, that funds for this purpose will fail. It has been my lot, as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, to witness the very large and most gratifying offers of benefactions for augmentation of livings, to be met by grants from our Board.\* This liberal spirit will, I conceive, be evoked in far ampler proportions by the great change of which we are treating. The chief hindrance to the liberality of Churchmen for Church purposes now is, the semblance of self-sufficiency which the Church has put on by reason of her union with the State. Remove this hindrance, and the fountain of private liberality will flow as it has never flowed before.

I know it is the fashion to quote certain present results of the voluntary system as deterrent from its application to ourselves. But the cases are not parallel. The voluntary organizations which are quoted as examples are for the most part of the

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\* The aggregate value of these offers at the annual distribution of the Common Fund in 1866, 1867, 1868 has been—

For the year 1866	..	..	..	..	..	£280,000
„ 1867	..	..	..	..	..	323,000
„ 1868	..	..	..	..	..	322,000

It should in fairness be mentioned, that a portion of this sum in each case has been a renewal of previous offers, which our means would not enable us to meet with grants in aid.

character of adventures, owing their existence to a temporary excitement, and having no permanent bond of union. They are the outlying stations of some "cause," with difficulty kept going, and providing but a miserable pittance for the resident minister. Such results are no doubt highly unsatisfactory, and required the strongly-spiced exhortations, which served the subtlest of our Prelates as telling arguments. But we might appeal from that Prelate's oratory to his better reason, and ask him, what such cases have in common with that of the Anglican Church, the ancient and usual faith of the land?

Of course it is not for a moment denied that failures may be expected to occur; that there probably will still be, under the disestablishment, parishes ill-provided for, and clergymen inadequately paid. To say this, is to concede, that the present state of things will not be altogether got rid of. But as compared with the present state of things, is there any probability of the number of such cases being increased? Certainly, one may boldly say, the very contrary. The case of the miserably endowed small parish is at present little short of desperate. The merits of its claim to augmentation have no chance of being heard. It does not come within the legally prescribed augmentation rules of

the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; and it has no resident squire, who might offer them a benefaction to be met by a grant. It remains, as it has remained time out of mind, tacked on to some neighbouring benefice; with its one duty a week, and with or without its hour and a half's "Sunday School," as its only means of instruction. Its people may deem themselves fortunate, if they have attracted the notice of some zealous itinerants, and if these have warmed them into anything like religious consciousness, or acted as a goad in the sides of their non-resident Vicar.

We may safely say, that such a case as this could not long subsist under the disestablishment. Among the powers which will have departed from the Church, the "*vis inertiae*" will certainly be one. Church abuses of this kind will have ceased to be driven for exposure to the public papers, at present their only tribunal of possible redress; they will be amenable to an accessible and effective superintendence, which will do all that can be done to remedy the evil.

And be it remembered, that these words "all that can be done," will then have a meaning widely different from their present one. Any attempt at exertion for good, under our existing State Establishment, is made under the greatest possible difficulties.

We are fettered on all sides. First, the power just mentioned, the “vis inertię,”—the tendency of stillness to keep still,—is immense. Whatever be our grounds of action, there is an important, venerable, and highly respectable set of men, whom we may at once put down as formidable opponents. “Why should that be touched, which has lasted three hundred years?” This argument sets aside all merits of a case, and effectually unites the opposition votes. But, powerful as it is, it is not content to stand alone. It summons to its aid the “lion in the streets,” to subdue the timid into acquiescence. “Besides, if they be touched, who can tell what may be changed next?” Not one proposed reform in ten ever struggles past these two guardians of the *status quo*, the Leo Piger, and the Leo Compitalis.

But suppose it does, and idly imagines it is about to be put in act. There awaits it a foe, hardly less formidable than those others. It must be fitted into the iron frame of PRECEDENT. Whatever is to be done, must only be done as it always has been done. I remember a time, when the agency of Missionary Societies was vehemently denounced by the then prevailing “High and Dry,” because they “deemed themselves to ask pennies from women and children.” It was a thing unheard of, undignified; there was no precedent for it. And it is a notable

fact in this obstruction by precedent, that, in each case, it lasts just long enough to do mischief, and then breaks down. Measures which were the horror of Bumbledom half a century ago, are its cherished precedents now. But when first proposed, they were kept back by this opposition till their bloom of opportunity was gone by, and others had outstripped us in the race. It has ever been certainly not "the wisdom" of the Church of England, to allow agencies, confessed by common sense to be imperative, to be first started by others, and then, when they have become institutions with the rest of the world, laggingly, feebly, and perfunctorily to imitate them, and take immense credit for the proceeding.

"What can be done," in the present Church of England, is also fatally hampered by *the law*. I speak not now of those wholesome restrictions which the law puts on the action of every man and body of men for the public good and safety: but of technical difficulties thrown in the way of almost every attempt at amelioration. What could be a more notable instance of this, than that which happened to Convocation during this last summer? We were specially summoned to meet on St. Swithin's Day. It was understood that we were to receive the Royal license for the reform of the Lower House, in order to the more effective representation of the clergy.



Many were the early breakfasts eaten that sultry morning in far-away parsonages: for we came from all parts of the province in obedience to the summons: great were the expectations, or small, according to their view of things, of proctors converging, in early trains, on the Jerusalem chamber. We met—but it was to be instantly prorogued, and sent back to the places whence we came. It was understood, not by any notification vouchsafed to us, but by public rumour, that an individual official, whose formal sanction was necessary, had demurred to the general view of the legality of the proposed license. *Summum jus summa injuria*, never was more aptly illustrated. The members of Convocation, feeling that the representation of the clergy in their House is inadequate and unfair, desire to remove the blot, and take the proper constitutional steps so to do. All is ready, and action is going forward. But the whole is frustrated, and the reform deferred no one knows how long, by a legal scruple. Surely the fetter, on which there is such a strain, cannot be far from breaking.

These instances have served to shew how our efforts for amendment are weighted and impeded at present; and how differently they may expect to speed, when these incumbent obstacles shall have been removed. When the whole organism of the



Church shall have started into life and reality, many things may be hoped for, which her present state absolutely precludes. Among them is, something like an effective supervision of clerical work. That this is one of our gravest desiderata, surely none can doubt. It is a shame, that a parish should be handed over to the incapable, or the indolent, or the secular incumbent, for the term of his natural life. Such a person ought to be removeable, not at the caprice of an individual or the dictation of a clique, but by the decision of a fairly chosen governing body. When the Church leans, not on the State and the law of freehold, but on her own demonstrated usefulness, the Bishop's visitations will become realities, and will be genuine inspections of parochial results. Flagrant cases will be referred by the Bishop to his Diocesan Council, and by them gravely and temperately dealt with. I would venture even so far as this ; that, short of proved incapacity or delinquency, manifested unfitness for peculiar work might warrant the enforced exchange of benefices, so that we might oftener find the right man in the right place. These last considerations involve, of course, the important and difficult question of *patronage*. As in other apparent difficulties, so here I believe a way might be found for adjustment, which should be equitable to the present patrons, while it would ensure the

appointment of competent persons to benefices. I forbear to indicate it, because in this, as in other departments of my subject, it is not my purpose to enter into matters of detail.

An interesting question with regard to probable disestablishment is, what will become of our Cathedrals. And here let me confess that, warmly attached as I am, first by disposition, and then owing to circumstances, to the fabrics and the services of the Cathedrals, I cannot but look on them as the least satisfactory parts of our present Church system. It can hardly be doubted that, in proportion to the amount of the revenues absorbed by them, their help in the national work of the Church is almost as nothing. And I write this, being fully aware of, and being in the habit of urging, the real arguments for their sustentation. Their work might be an important one, but their present constitution effectually precludes them from doing it. And by this I do not mean that any recent changes have hampered or disabled them, or that they might, by ampler endowments and restoration of suppressed dignities, be better fitted for their work. Not any cramping of the capitular system, but the capitular system itself, is the great hindrance in their way. And this, in several points of view.

First of all, the Cathedrals have fallen through

between two incompatible hypotheses. On the one hand, it is held that they are to be the great centres of Church life for the diocese. Very good; and no view can be more sound, no state of things more desirable. But, on the other, they are defended as affording posts of dignified repose for men who have deserved well of the Church. Now these two theories are exclusive the one of the other. In order to carry out the first, the cathedral authorities must be men of diocesan knowledge and experience, men in vigour of mind and body, sent there to work, and not to rest; while, in pursuance of the second, they will be composed of the very class of persons least fitted for the former purpose; they will be, at the best, bookish men, or men broken by parochial toil, but emphatically men sent there to rest, and not to work. And the consequence of this incompatibility has been, universal, though often undeserved, dissatisfaction with our capitular bodies as such. Is a cathedral dignity vacant? The journals teem with reports, associating with the appointment the names of many distinguished men. The appointment, we will say, is fittingly made. The same journals are full of praise of the person promoted, and of the just grounds of his promotion. But this is the last note of commendation he will ever get. Having become a dignity, he is pulled asunder by their inconsistent theories of his

position—the operative, as demanded by his influence; the non-operative, as required by his dignity.

But the matter is far worse than this. I have been writing as if the second theory were normally carried out; whereas the state of things is far otherwise. Hardly in half the cases occurring is a dean's or a canon's stall the reward of distinction, or of toil in the Church's service. It would be invidious for me to specify the effecting causes of ordinary cathedral promotion; let the public use their eyes, and they will not fail to discern them. And the result is that we have, as the governing bodies of our mother churches, men certainly blameless, and personally worthy of all esteem, but for any purpose of subserving the work of the Church, about the least fitted of any that could be gathered together. And this not from any fault or defect of the men as individuals, but owing to the circumstances of their appointment, and the nature of the bond which connects them. The Cathedral *esprit de corps* is ordinarily one of isolation from the diocese, and from common clerical work; the scrupulous maintenance of certain rights and privileges, as against the invasion of the wants and necessities of the age. And I must with pain confess that eleven years' experience has not removed, but has rather strengthened, the impression of former days, that the present influence, as a whole,

of a great Cathedral in a town, is rather for evil than for good. This I believe to be mainly owing to our capitular system. The whole body is a phenomenon, in the estimation of the people, quite extraneous to anything which comes home to them in the work or influence of the Church. They see what is in their imaginations a vast sum of the Church's money spent among them without any assignable Church result. They feel that there is a bar set up between them and the Cathedral; that however generously the dean and canons may individually fill up subscription lists, there is not, and cannot be, any real flow and re-flow of sympathy between them and the "Great Church." Or if there is, they know it to be exceptional, and owing to some influence which the next appointment may reverse. And it may be added as an element in the consideration, that the contrast, so painful in most cathedral cities, between the needy clergy who minister to them, and the wealthy clergy who do not, tends in any direction rather than that of ensuring respect for the latter. Among the many mistakes, most of them now happily in course of correction, of which our Ecclesiastical Commissioners have been guilty, never was a greater, than the neglect of providing, out of the cathedral revenues, for the pressing wants of the cathedral cities. Their cases ought to have been made a

special exception, and dealt with at once. But red tape prevailed; and they were left out in the cold, to await with others their share in the common fund.

Should the great change which we have been contemplating pass on our Church, it is surely impossible that the capitular system should survive. For first, it is an evil in itself, and must be reformed: secondly, we shall want our Cathedrals for Church purposes: and thirdly, on whatever conditions we are disestablished, we shall want their revenues. It will be impossible to devote the same proportion of Church property, be the absolute amount what it may, to the maintenance of dignities.

The magnificent fabrics themselves, with their beautiful services, need not suffer change or neglect. The Cathedral is the church of the Bishop. Let it become really so in all our dioceses, as it already is at Salisbury, and in some others. Either the Bishop might himself be rector of the cathedral, or a rector might be appointed under him. Perhaps the latter plan would be the better, as the rector of the cathedral might be the chief carrier out of the work of the mother church in the diocese.

I have allowed, perhaps naturally, too much room to this point of the future destination of our Cathedrals. I only return to it to write the apparent truism, that whatever posts of dignity and repose are

provided by the Church in her freedom, ought to be in connexion with counsel, and not with active work. Dignified position might be reserved for the Bishop's assessors in the Diocesan Council, and the residences of the present cathedral bodies might be available for them ; with stalls indeed in the church, but without a share in its government, which should be vested in the Bishop, or in its rector by the Bishop's appointment.

I bring this paper to a close, leaving many interesting matters untouched. Among these is the modified relation between the Anglican Church and the Non-conformist bodies, which must begin with the fact of disestablishment. What my view on this matter is, may be inferred from my previous paper in this journal, "On the Union of Christendom." Among these is also the probable effect of disestablishment on the doctrine and ritual of the Church. On this I feel that it would be as idle to speculate, as it would be faithless and distrustful to express any foreboding of evil. Believing that the progress of the Faith in the Church is guided by the Spirit, who leads her into all Truth, I have no fear that in her freedom from secular coercion she will have less of His guidance than she had before she acquired it.

My endeavour has been, to take a calm view of what I believe to be an inevitable change : not to



appear as a partizan for or against that change, but simply to treat it as coming upon us, and to enquire what, in some important points, will be our condition in consequence.

I have not, with my friend Dr. Vaughan,\* gone for comfort in such a prospect to the indestructibility of the Church of Christ as united to her living Head. True as that is, it surely does not apply to the question of the permanence of this or that particular branch of the Church Universal. Lord Harrowby has well pointed out, in his able letter to the 'Times' on Dr. Vaughan's sermon, that "the Churches of Asia, the birthplace of our religion, and of Africa, the seat of some of its brightest ornaments and highest learning, and the Churches of Italy and Spain," may now be inquired after in vain; and that "these general assurances of the inextinguishable life of the Church" are not "to make us indifferent to human action and human legislation in regard to its concerns."

I would earnestly say, in conclusion, that very solemn duties are incumbent upon us as Churchmen, in the prospect, or even in the possibility, of such a change. Nothing can less become us, than

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\* 'Prospects of the Church of England: a Sermon,' &c. London: Bell and Daldy. 1868.



the attitude and the temper displayed by some of those who deprecate it. The approved weapons among them seem to be an indiscriminate calling of foul names, an attributing of motives which those charged with them would rather die than entertain, and a studious mystification of the great subject at issue by fallacies, which if they do not see through, they are not fit to handle it at all.

Let ours be a path distinctly and studiedly opposite. We shall most effectually defend our Church, and the truth of which we hold her to be the guardian, by being best prepared for the change, and readiest cheerfully to act on the manifested course of God's providence. Great sacrifices will possibly be required of us. When the change is imminent, it will be most undesirable, in all cases except those which cannot be avoided, that the maintenance of vested rights should protract, for a whole generation, a mixed and impracticable state of things. Very much will depend on the attitude which the Church and its rulers assume towards the legislature when the time shall come. If, as there appears too much reason to fear will be the case, we fight the inevitable inch by inch, entrenching ourselves behind chimerical theories and obsolete precedents, the result will be calamitous indeed. But if we generously advance into the fore-

front of the change, and show ourselves worthy to guide the English Church in this crisis of her fortunes, I know of no Church in the world that might win for herself a prouder position :—I know of no opportunity in the history of any Church, so pregnant with good, and so promising of Christian progress.

THE END.



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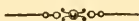
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